WHAT CAN WE USE AS A WORLD LANGUAGE?

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THE
Saturday Review
OF LITERATURE

VOLUME XXVI No. 40 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1943 FIFTEEN CENTS

WORLD LANGUAGE SYMPOSIUM:

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by Wallace Stegner
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"GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON"
by Maisie Ward
Reviewed by Ann F. Wolfe

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The Saturday Review of Literature

What Can We Use for a World Language?

EDITOR'S NOTE: Two months ago, *The Saturday Review* began a general discussion of the question of a world language with an article by H. G. Wells. In general, Mr. Wells's prognosis was unfavorable. With specific reference to Basic English and other "Basic" suggestions, Mr. Wells remarked that such systems seemed "likely to converge upon a universal, uninflected world pigeon speech with a vaster vocabulary in common than any languages have ever had hitherto." Considerable correspondence on the "Letters" page discussed these and other points brought up by Mr. Wells. Three weeks ago, *SRL,* noting the endorsement by Prime Minister Winston Churchill of Basic English, republished from an earlier issue an article by C. K. Ogden, the originator of Basic English, explaining the purposes and techniques of B. E., as well as presenting a list of the words in the basic vocabulary. Further exploring the subject, *SRL* this week presents a symposium discussing not only B. E. but other systems proposed for a world tongue.

Interlanguage

ALLAN HARRISON FRY

THE question of Interlanguage (auxiliary language of international communication) — like what to do about India—is not one to be solved by simple ukase. All discussions of Esperanto, Basic English, or what have you, must, in order to make sense, take some of the *fundamenta* of linguistic science into consideration.

In the first place, there is nothing at all new in the idea of *inter-language.* The medieval philosophers attempted to construct "philosophical languages," as they called them, by symbolizing, alphabetically, their (*i.e.,* Aristotle's) analysis of the Universe. Thus

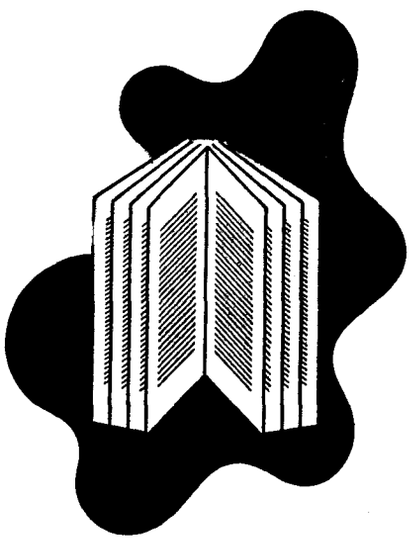
a = all living things — human and non-human.
ba = things in the water.
da = things with scales.

Then *abada* is a "fish," and so on *ad infinitum.* It is easy to see where this would lead with our analysis of nature changing almost hourly.

Through the years, other hundreds of schemes have put forward proposals for an *inter-language* along these general lines:

1. Wider extension of an existing national language — French, English, Spanish, Bengali, etc. Even Latin, which is not as defunct as one might think, has been proposed by Dr. Harald Fuchs of Basel. This type of scheme has the merit of capitalizing on an already existing language situation (or situations). However, exceedingly bad—*i.e.,* non-phonemic—alphabets and strong national biases (the old race-language culture ghost) must be carefully disposed of. In this connection MacDougald and I will shortly publish a "Linguistic Census of the World," listing all languages of any consequence, the number of speakers and literates over ten years old (Part I, "Languages of Africa" will appear *ca.* Nov. 15 in Handbooks of Africa Series, University of Pennsylvania). Only with such information can one put a case forward numerically, *not culturally,* for any particular language.

It is, of course, taken for granted in all discussions of *interlanguage* that a linguistic pedagogy will be used which is based on the recent findings of linguistic scientists and not upon the speculations of polyglots and philology fans.



2. Creation of an artificial language based on some already existing national language.

In this category fall Esperanto (already in a flourishing state with thousands of speakers and three generations of continued use). Professor Peano's "Latino Sine Flexione," "Ido," "Romanol," Jespersen's "Novial," and many others (*cf.* Guerard's "Short History of the International Language Movement"). These schemes, favoring this or that national language also have the disadvantage of inculcating a bias for or against a particular language family and its political subdivisions. It is questionable to me just how the Chinese or Thailanders would feel about a language fabricated out of Indo-European Romance or Germanic odds and ends. Somebody should ask them, on a large scale.

3. Languages based on a selection of certain existing elements of already existing languages. This includes those that "just growed up" like Pidgin English (Pidgin—probably a mishearing of the word "business" on the part of Pacific Islanders), both the Melanesian and West African varieties. Pidgin French (Coastal West Africa) as well as the formal types like Basic English, etc. All except Basic English are going concerns, each numbering many thousands of speakers.

Basic English does not stand today in high favor with scientific linguists. It has been thoroughly and ably

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damned by West, Swenson, and others (*cf.* "A Critical Examination of Basic English," Bulletin No. 2, University of Toronto, 1934, *q.v.*).

It is indeed unfortunate that Mr. Churchill raised its ghost recently at Cambridge. Basic English is definitely not the panacea for interlanguage ills. It is a kind of quack based on a faulty analysis of the language process. It has a magic-sounding name.

In light of the recent findings of Linguistic Science (*cf.* in general *Language* — published quarterly by the Linguistic Society of America) the following would seem, briefly, to be in order:

1. It is not too arrogant to suggest some form of English as a World Language (*cf.* the forthcoming Linguistic Census). It certainly would not be forced in many places.
2. Some form of English should be made easy to acquire.
3. Effective procedure must be to select the most common words and grammatical features and present them, not as Messrs. Ogden and Co. have done but based, rather, on a careful analysis of what actually takes place *in the spoken language* (*cf.* Palmer's substitution tables).
4. Select some dialect or dialects of the American, British, Canadian, or Antipodean variety. The arbitrary use of Central British is not to be condoned on grounds of either provenience or mathematics. Many studies are now available (*cf.* especially — *Studies in Linguistics,* George Trager, Editor, New Haven. Vol. I No. 17, April 1943 pp. 1-6).
5. A first level of instruction based on a frequency count of spoken language; 1,000 to 2,000 words and, say, 100 grammatical features.
6. A second or advanced level of the *3rd* or *4th* thousand words and more grammatical features. Basic English's arbitrary limit of 850 or so words is ridiculous.
7. Pedagogies based on Modern Phonetic, Phonemic, Morphological and Syntactic analysis should be used.

Special Services Division of the Army is already doing this in more than forty languages all over the world and has revolutionized the language business. Real, live, kicking English can now be easily gotten across to any group in an amazingly short time following these techniques.

Allan Harrison Fry is former Professor of Philology at Catholic University in Washington, D. C.

A Second Language

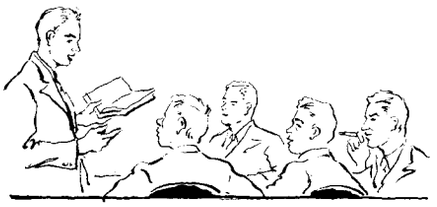
JACQUES BARZUN

IT is hard to answer in a few words the question "What do you think of Basic English?" for Basic English is not one thing but several, and each of the things that it is or can be calls forth different judgments. The first guise in which Basic appears is that of a second language for world-wide communication. The arguments for having such a medium and for choosing English are, to my mind, entirely acceptable. Next comes the idea of a simplified English, designed to make it easier and quicker to learn for foreigners of every clime. This notion contains an unspoken belief that learning a language is equally difficult for all and may be made easier for all; and in this supposition "all" can mean all individuals or all nationalities. At this point I begin to doubt the usefulness of a simplified speech taken by itself, especially when its pronunciation is left wholly out of account.

But the advocates of Basic English have an answer ready. They point to the absurd grammars used in many schools, with overloaded and useless vocabularies and needless rules and constructions. Basic English turns here into a pedagogical device to solve the problem: how best to *begin* learning English; the solution being to limit the number of words and grammatical forms. The testimonials offered on behalf of Basic English for this particular claim are most convincing. But it is only fair to add that the so-called "direct method" used before Basic, and the Berlitz method, which is even older, have justly been praised for quite similar advantages.

We are not yet through. In addition to being a proposal for a world tongue, a simplified English, and an educational get-speech-quick method, Basic is also the result of very interesting researches by C. K. Ogden on the nature of meanings, particularly on the reducibility of the abstract and synthetic terms of a rich language to a relatively few simple and concrete words. It is from these investigations that Messrs. Ogden and Richards draw the assurance that one can say anything in Basic—barring technical terms—and that they make bold to "translate" Plato, the Bible, and possibly Mother Goose also, into Basic.

It is easy to see how these four



manifestations of Basic English have become linked together and how in his latest book Mr. Richards can begin by preaching world understanding, go on to explain the elements of the system, eulogize Mr. Ogden's master mind on the way, and wind up with testimonials from school teachers and users of "simplified" prose. Nevertheless I believe that this combining of four "uses" is really a confusion of ideas, sound and unsound.

I spoke before of the clear case for promoting English as the world's second language. The case for making the study of English rapid, agreeable, and practical is equally clear. By all means let us wage war on stilted, inhuman classroom lingo and on the loose polysyllabic prose of officialdom and bad journalism. The underlying principle of Basic can undoubtedly help us in both these crusades. But what about a world language? Around this point I find Mr. Richards running in a circle. First, Basic is a limited idiom in which there will be nothing hard for the foreigner to understand—hence the "translations" and, logically, a general effort on the part of all English speakers to speak and write Basic except among themselves. But next, Basic appears as a mere gateway to full English, so that we need have no fear of a reduction of our speech to the Basic list. A kindred contradiction appears in the idea of the list itself—these "850 words which can be written on one side of a sheet of paper." First, the list is a good deal larger than 850 words by virtue of all the "related forms" belonging to many of the words and the special words needed for practical use in any given field. But then even when expanded, it turns out to be much shorter than the list used by the simplest soul in his or her own tongue. Lacking such elemental words as "know," "selfish," and "without," it demands a skill in circumlocution which makes it a delightful challenge to the master of English but a torment, I should think, to the literate in other tongues.

For whom is the world language intended anyhow? Heeding Mr. Richards's plea that we be practical, I should say *first* for the businessmen, the diplomats, the tourists, the men of science and intellect all over the world. Later, we hope, the remoter toiling masses may learn English, but those who represent one country in its dealing with another are bound to be, for some time to come, persons with more ideas than there are words in Basic. It will, of course, be objected that the combination of 850 words and their derivatives is ample. But it is precisely here that the fundamental error appears. To

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obtain Basic we reduce abstract to concrete and learn rules which cannot go wrong: "the boy ate the cat." But to rebuild a language for general use out of these parts is a greater task than appears at first sight. I find no evidence that it is possible to write Basic and say what you mean without first knowing English thoroughly. By "saying what you mean" I have in mind a business letter, a political article, or anything other than hotel-and-railway talk or beginner's prose. And by the need for a thorough knowledge of English I mean that, in order to make sense out of a limited number of concrete words, one must already possess English idiom or fall into the unintelligible style of Irwin's Japanese student. In short, whenever we go beyond small talk we speak in thoughts and not in mere words.

A special case of this truth is the difficulty found by all foreigners in our composite verbs. You can learn all the prepositions and have a fair idea of how to use "get" with "up," "down," and "off," but by what means are you going to find the meaning of "get out from under"? Mr. Richards squirms out of the difficulty by saying first that it does not exist and then that a foreigner has to learn idioms anyway. He is wrong about the absence of difficulty, as I can testify, having learned English when old enough to take an interest in comparative grammar. And he is inconsistent again in telling us that Basic is *much* simpler and at the same time that it does not absolve one from overcoming the toughness of the language.

However I look at Basic, only two possibilities seem open. Either we adopt it exclusively and gradually develop—as any language would—a set of conventional circumlocutions for the missing words. With the pressure of a demand that could be organized and the chance of profits in publishing, radio, movie, and victrola "conversions," this could be managed—perhaps sooner than we might at first suppose. Or else we take advantage of the useful idea in Basic English, adapting it very flexibly to our pedagogical needs and to the spreading abroad of English, simplified not in one rigid way but in a dozen, so as to take equal advantage of existing knowledge and literacy in foreigners (*e.g.*, of kindred roots in German, French, Dutch, and other tongues), and thus work in a minor but valuable way towards better communication among the peoples of the world.

Jacques Barzun, a frequent contributor to these pages, is Assistant Professor of History at Columbia University.

Obstacles to "Basic"

WILLARD THORP

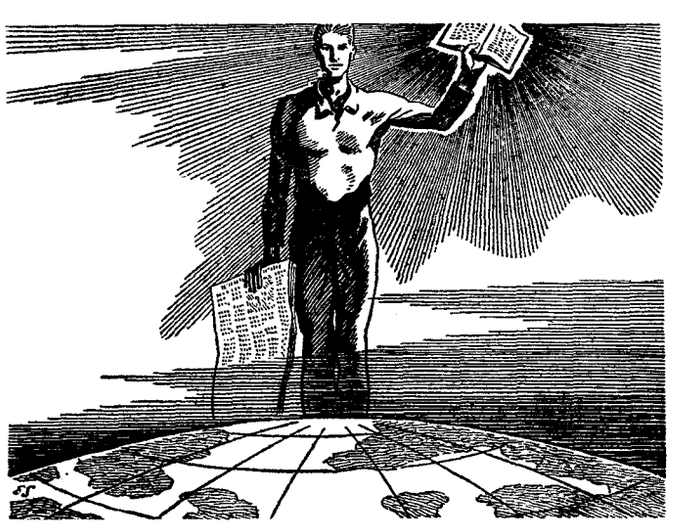
As a universal medium of communication, Basic English has none of the freakish characteristics of Esperanto, Novial, Ido, or other similar invented languages. It is sound pedagogically because it is based on psychological fact and is in accord with the genius of the English language. As its discoverers rightly claim, what most significantly differentiates it from other universal languages is the fact that it is not a dead end but leads easily and directly to higher levels of expression in English. It is a key, therefore, which will open many doors, providing an easy means of communication among peoples of diverse tongues, as well as access, by those who speak English, to the subtleties of expression.

It happens that English already comes as near to being a universal language as any which is spoken the world over. But anyone who has ever glanced at an English grammar prepared for the use of foreigners knows what an exasperating book it is bound to be. A few pages suffice to explain the simple syntax of the language; a hundred are required to make even a beginning with the bewildering homonyms and synonyms, the inconsistent pronunciations, the baffling verbals. To the foreigner every linguistic situation in English must seem so much an exception to the rule that there cannot be said to be any rules. The discoverers of Basic, by essentializing the language, and especially by the reduction of the verbs to eighteen, have really made English the principal contender as a world language—conditions permitting.

Anyone interested in the future of Basic is bound to ponder these conditions, for they lie pretty largely outside the control of its promoters and in the realm of chance. Mr. Ogden and Mr. Richards and their followers are well aware of the difficulties, but their zeal makes them perhaps too hopeful.

Will the Russians or the Chinese or the Spanish-speaking peoples be willing to see English become a real world language? We are all aware of the potential power of Russia and China after the war, but we can only guess whether that power will be expressed in an intense nationalism which might be very sensitive to Anglo-American encroachment. It seems to us who speak English and who recognize the great work which the exploiters of Basic have done, very reasonable that Basic should be taught and used on the Amazon and the Yangtze, but will it seem so to the Brazilians and the Chinese?

Another situation which is equally imponderable is the inertia of teachers of English. I suspect that Mr. Richards and the Harvard Committee on English Language Studies already have plenty of evidence about possible opposition from that quarter. Also is it going to seem natural and necessary to thousands of writers who prepare public documents which must reach the lowest levels of intelligence in the country to take the trouble to learn to think and write Basic? We are willing to make the effort to learn a foreign tongue because the necessity, if we are to understand what is written in that language, is self-evident, but the necessity for learning Basic is not so self-evident. I suppose something like a mass enthusiasm both within the English-



—From "The Four Freedoms."

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speaking countries and in other lands is going to be required before Basic ceases to be a highly interesting academic development and becomes a universal tool. Presidents and prime ministers can help and so could school systems rigidly controlled by central governments, but even such powerful assistance may not be enough.

Mr. Richards is at great pains to show how Basic might conceivably become an instrument for the spread of democratic ideas through the world. He wishes to see it used as an agent in post-war reconstruction. I wonder if holding out such dazzling rewards for the world-wide study of Basic may not do the cause more harm than good. Basic is much more likely to get ready acceptance if it proves first to be highly useful at the practical level. Failure of Basic to clarify man's thinking about war and economic rivalry and social matters might discredit it altogether. It is not good propaganda to promise too much.

One aspect of the discussion of Basic troubles me considerably. Its discoverers have for so many years been aware of and distressed by the failure of most readers to comprehend English even as written by the best masters, that too often a note of pride creeps into their accounts of the precision of Basic. A kind of presumption emerges that a good writer in Basic could do a better job of communicating than almost anyone except Shakespeare. I know that Mr. Richards could point to many a passage where he derides any such imputation but the tone is there nevertheless. In line with this I am sorry to see the promoters of Basic doing over Shakespeare and the Bible. This can go too far, especially in America where it is the universal tendency to hunt for short cuts to anything valuable and desirable.

Willard Thorp is Professor of English and American Literature at Princeton University.

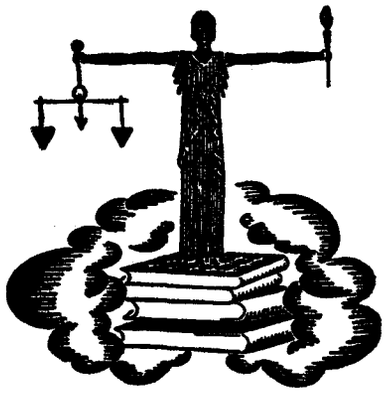
Intellectual Imperialism?

CARL J. FRIEDRICH

MR. CHURCHILL'S startling plug for Basic English came as a complete surprise to his listeners. Some, no doubt, were unpleasantly surprised. Others, including myself, were delighted to see the issue of world-wide communication given such a decided push. Long interested in Basic and its possibilities, I had been bothered by the pedantic views of many of my colleagues. Richards's recent exposition of Basic's possibilities, in "Basic English and its Uses," frankly advocated its use for a world language. It seemed to me deserving of very thorough exploration. He thus put the point: "We are citizens of a world in which no hand that can help can be spared, if we are to put it into any better order. . . . Among ways of taking a share in the work is the furtherance of a world language." To the student of government and international politics, English seems predestined to become, if not the world language, then at any rate the most important vehicle of communication throughout the world.

But Mr. Churchill's proposal carried other overtones. He told us that a British Cabinet committee had been set up to study and report upon Basic English. "Here you have a very carefully wrought plan for an international language capable of very wide transactions of practical business and of exchange of ideas." He used the phrase "a common citizenship" exclusively with reference to the English-speaking peoples. The appeal was convincing enough while it lasted, but on second thought, and after extended conversations with friends, growing doubts appeared. Mr. Churchill's advocacy of Basic was characterized by one thoughtful listener as "intellectual imperialism." Yet the task of communication between peoples in a world-wide community remains an urgent one.

The work of Ogden and Richards has been focused on Basic *English*. But must it be English? "For the growth of a world consciousness, depth of mutual understanding is paramount." This very appropriate remark of J. A. Richards is not, however, dependent upon the sole use of English for communication. There is, indeed, no reason why other languages should not develop a similar pattern of simplified expression and gain the same



advantages which Richards claims we shall derive from learning Basic. When he says, "Basic is favorably inclined to the sort of meeting of mind which better human relations require," we should like to think of Basic Russian as well as Basic English.

For some time now, scholars in linguistics have been at work preparing basic word lists for many languages. Such lists are, at the present time, being widely used in the intensive language instruction offered in colleges and universities for Army personnel. Extraordinary strides have been made in streamlining linguistic instruction through this and other devices. Gone are the days of the old-fashioned drill on grammar. At Harvard and Yale, men in their forties have been taught to talk Italian with a degree of fluency in three months, while at the same time receiving an intensive course in other subjects dealing with Italy. Even more astonishing is the achievement of a measure of speaking ability in Russian within three months at Cornell and Harvard recently. Again the program was part of a much broader education. In short, while no carefully developed parallel to Basic has as yet been completed for other languages than English, there is no inherent reason why we should not urge the French, the Russians, the Chinese, the Hindus, the Japanese, the Germans, the Italians, and so forth to follow suit and organize Basics of their own languages which might in turn become available for world-wide communication. If that were done, genuine international coöperation could be expected in this important field.

Some say, of course, "Why bother? One language is all we want." Others come forward with Esperanto and other artificial speech material. This is not the place to discuss the improbability of any such "language" ever acquiring sufficient currency. But to the student of government and politics, it is clear that the use of a language is intimately bound up with the prepotency of the group using that particular means of communicating with others. Hence, a genuinely international viewpoint will recognize the necessity of give and take. It would, of course, be very nice if all people spoke English. The fact remains that they do not. And while we may succeed in getting a good many Russians to learn Basic English, it is more likely to happen if we offer them the token of good will which consists in a good many Americans learning Basic Russian. And there would be the added advantage that all-round interchange of ideas would thereby definitely be improved.

In his remarkable address, Mr. Churchill used a remarkable phrase.

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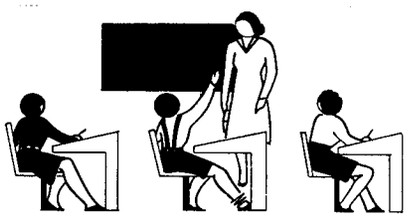
After saying that "Such plans offer far better prizes than taking away other peoples' provinces or land or grinding them down in exploitation," he exclaimed: "The empires of the future are the empires of the mind." True, we hope. Such empires of the mind will be fashioned in all the world's great living languages. For words are the tools with which the mind works. If the Republic of Plato can be rendered in Basic English, it presumably would be feasible to have it in Basic Russian. If an American and Russian wished to converse with each other, even on so high-falutin a subject as the Republic of Plato, they presumably could do it successfully if each knew and had mastered the Basic of the other. Even more important is the New Testament in Basic. If each man had mastered at least one other tongue in Basic besides his own, the foundation would be laid for world citizenship. For he would have emerged from the mental isolation of the mother tongue. He would enjoy the triumph of having achieved a basis for intercultural discourse and understanding.



And then—only then—shall we have a right to hope that perhaps Basic English may become the most universal medium of expression. There is a fair chance for it, but that may be lost by injecting political issues. Mr. Churchill's bold suggestion, if narrowly interpreted, may become the most decided setback Basic English has yet suffered. But if broadened into true international equality of all tongues, if treated as the pioneer of what all languages ought to achieve, it may provide the greatest push for a universal means of communication yet.

Carl J. Friedrich, Professor of History at Harvard University, is the author of the recently published "The New Belief in the Common Man."

B. E. — A Polished Instrument

IVY LITVINOFF

THOUGH I have no interest in the question of an "International Language," I am all for Basic English as a teaching system, because, after all, thousands are in need of learning English *now*, for one purpose or another, without waiting to see what the future of language will be.

As a lover of my mother-tongue, I am deeply conscious of the care which has been taken by the makers of Basic English to do no damage to the sound or forms of the English language. Most books for teaching languages, while they may have gone some way from "the pen of the gardener," are dry or unpleasing, or, still worse, "bright" in a way which gets on the learner's nerves. The examples of Basic English in C. K. Ogden's "Basic Step by Step" have rhythm and sense and a serious undercurrent which is something new in a book of this sort. Here are lines from the fourth division of the book, at a level of about 120 words:

> Rain and snow do not come from a clear sky. A sky with a cloud in it is not a clear sky. Rain and snow come from clouds.

By the fourteenth division the learner has a knowledge of about 550 words (there are thirty divisions in the book, with an increase of about thirty new words to every division), and more complex accounts of natural things may be put before him. These lines come from "Noise":

> In the country every sound is clearer than in the town, because the noise is less. The voice of a man, and even what is said, may come to your ears across a field. And the sound of a cow-bell, or of the feet of a horse on the road, may come from the other end of the farm.
>
> But that is only in quiet weather. The noise of thunder keeps you from hearing all other sounds. And sometimes, in a wind, even if a person is near you, not one word of what he says comes to your ears.

Writing like this gives learners a good example of simple English prose, and I have frequently had true pleasure from the writing of Russians who have been working at their English for a very short time. My memory will long keep a letter sent to me by a young Georgian girl:

> Here I was, waiting, waiting, and the long hand of the opposite clock going round its cold white face, and still my friend did not come. I was ready to say: "There is no more hope!" and go back to my father's house, when suddenly whom did I see but the kind good face of my friend, with a smile on itself for me. Then I said to myself: "There will always be hope!"

No system will make the first attempts at writing or talking in a strange language without error possible. It *is* hard to get across the idea that "opposite clock" and "a smile on itself" are not quite English—probably the only teacher able to get the "feeling" of any language across is experience. But errors of this sort are not the point—it is the grip on language structure, the sense of the direction of thought that are important. I have had numbers of letters from Russians learning English as good in their simple way as this one.

Some authorities have said that Basic English gives no help with the sounds of English, which are so hard to get right. In my experience, help is given by the very fact of limiting the word list.

I am hoping I have made it clear that I am not taking part in this discussion of an "International Language," but am happy for a chance of putting in my word for what are, in my opinion, the very important points of Basic English as the best possible instrument for learning English, when that is the end desired. The "International Language" will come when the nations are ready for it—not before. Man has been living a long time on the earth and his every word is the invention of his mind. Will he not be able to make the selection of the words needed for the one great language which the Russian linguist Marr says all our languages are moving to? Till then, let us do our best by learning and respecting the languages now in existence, as our need for them comes into existence. Some put the question: why does not every language have its Basic system? The answer is that every language will when and if its organization and rules are such that they may be formed into a simpler system which will be at the same time natural to the language and its forms. And when and if men with clear minds are able to do for another language what C. K. Ogden has done for English.

The foregoing contribution by Mme. Litvinoff is written in Basic English, except for the word "International." Mme. Litvinoff, wife of the former Soviet Ambassador to the United States, once taught Basic English in Moscow.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTICS (No. 496)

H. LORY:

JAPAN'S MILITARY MASTERS

Of all Japan's assets none is more important than this high morale of the Japanese army and people alike . . . drunk on their dreams of a white man's defeat, trained not to live for their country but to die for a greater Japan.

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A "Neutral" Tongue

GEORGE A. CONNOR

THE *Saturday Review* properly reprints C. K. Ogden's article on Basic English, in view of Winston Churchill's tribute to that "carefully wrought plan for an international language." But to stop there would be to ignore that other "carefully wrought plan"—the only living, worldwide interlanguage today—Esperanto.

There is epochal significance in Churchill's recognition of the need for an auxiliary tongue, to enable all "to move freely about the world and find everywhere a medium, *albeit primitive,* of intercourse and understanding." But in common with Ogden, his compatriot, Churchill "prefers to build on the old site" and "to preserve some of the old bricks," by promoting an admittedly primitive edition of his native English idiom *"for all nations."* He fails to grasp the logical, neutral, solution in the concept of interlanguage—Esperanto.

Churchill states frankly, "I do not see why we should not try to spread *our* common language even more widely throughout the globe." ". . . such plans offer far better prizes than taking away other people's provinces or land, . . ." *"The empires of the future are the empires of the mind."* This recalls various news items about competitors to Basic English—notably Basic Japanese for "The New Order in Asia," Simplified German for Hitler's "New Europe," and Basic Latin as proposed in Italy—all these presage linguistic and cultural warfare, unless we adopt the interlanguage Esperanto.

Dr. Mario Teixeira de Freitas, of the Brazilian Government, states the case for Latin-America when he says: "Only through Esperanto will we realize unity and confraternity under the very best spiritual conditions, because our endeavors in this respect will not bring about the subjection of any part of our populations to a biological and psychological creation of another group. Because of the use of its language among diverse peoples, such a group would have superiority and would occupy a privileged position. . . ." Many scholars, like Dr. Freitas, fear that Basic English would place the cultures of the world under a veritable empire of the English mind.

Conceivably, an organized Pidgin of any national group might partially remove the language barriers. But only Esperanto eliminates the *psychological barriers.* Any national tongue places men at disproportionate advantage—one is a native while the other is a foreigner, or both are foreigners speaking an alien tongue. The interlanguage Esperanto provides an absolutely neutral, linguistic foundation. Esperanto is composed of elements common to all, is mastered and used in the same way by all, and is entirely free from national pride and prejudice, or cultural encroachment. This elimination of the psychological barriers is the all-important requisite for the world auxiliary tongue.

Several million persons of the most diverse cultures, Occident and Orient, already use Esperanto. Attempts to create a rival composite interlanguage have failed, or remain mere projects in pamphlet form on library shelves, to be brought out occasionally as scarecrows to foster confusion and schism in the public mind, when this serves some rival purpose. Esperanto lives, and is applied in every field of endeavor. Many thousands of books and over one hundred journals were printed in Esperanto before the war. China, even today, sends out two vivid journals in Esperanto: "Vocoj el Oriento," and "Orienta Kuriero." Universal Congresses of Esperanto give living proof of the efficacy of the world tongue, with thousands of delegates from over forty nations participating. In Brazil, Esperanto is the official auxiliary language of a nation-wide governmental department.

Esperanto's basic vocabulary consists of about 1,000 root-words, but an infinite variety of new words can be built from this base because of a regularized system of affixes. There are no limitations, circumlocutions, or floundering among definitions, such as characterize Basic English. Esperanto has sixteen grammatical rules, no excep-

Esperanto at a Glance

The Alphabet of Esperanto

Aa	Bb	Cc	Ĉĉ	Dd
ah	*bo*	*tso*	*cho*	*do*
Ee	Ff	Gg	Ĝĝ	Hh
eh	*fo*	*go*	*Joe*	*ho*
Ĥĥ	Ii	Jj	Ĵĵ	Kk
hho	*ee*	*yo*	*zho*	*ko*
Ll	Mm	Nn	Oo	
lo	*mo*	*no*	*oh*	
Pp	Rr	Ss	Ŝŝ	Tt
po	*ro*	*so*	*sho*	*toe*
Uu	Ŭŭ	Vv	Zz	
oo	*woe*	*vo*	*zo*	

28 Letters. There is no Q, W, X, or Y.

A, E, I, O, U have approximately the vowel sounds heard in *bar, bear, beer, bore, boor.*

C is not sounded like S or K, but like *ts* in Tsar.

J has the sound of *y* in *yes.*

The sounds of ĉ, ĝ, ĥ, ĵ, ŝ, and ŭ are heard in *leech, liege, loch, leisure, leash,* and *leeway.*

ESPERANTO IS PHONETIC.

All letters sounded: one letter one sound.

ACCENT or STRESS falls on the last syllable but one.

No IRREGULARITIES. No EXCEPTIONS.

THE GRAMMAR is based upon SIXTEEN FUNDAMENTAL RULES, which have no exceptions

THE PARTS OF SPEECH are formed from Root-Words by the addition of appropriate Letters.

O is the ending of the NOUN: fakto, telefono, piano; gluo, fajro, tasko

ADJECTIVES end in **A**: evidenta, longa, granda; freŝa, furioza, simpla

NOUNS and ADJECTIVES form the PLURAL by adding **J** (*aj, oj* sound as in *my boy*): evidentaj faktoj longaj telefonoj grandaj pianoj

THE SIMPLE VERB HAS ONLY SIX INFLECTIONS.

INFINITIVE	PRESENT	PAST	FUTURE	CONDITIONAL	IMPERATIVE
I	AS	IS	OS	US	U
ESTI	estas	estis	estos	estus	estu
LERNI	lernas	lernis	lernos	lernus	lernu
HELPI	helpas	helpis	helpos	helpus	helpu

N marks the ACCUSATIVE (*direct object*): Mi (*I*) helpas lin (*him*); Li (*he*) helpas min (me); Ŝi lernas Esperanton

ADVERBS end in **E**: energie, entuziasme, diligente

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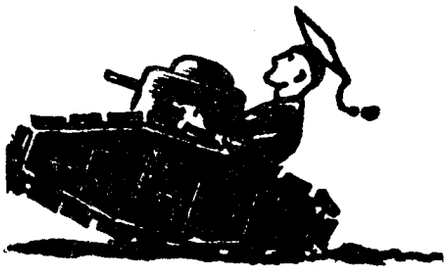

—From "Stops."

tions, no irregularities. The alphabet is scientifically phonetic—one letter, one sound—and a remarkable approximation to the system of the International Phonetic Alphabet. Esperanto's structure is agglutinative, which makes it closely akin to Asiatic tongues. This explains its steady progress in the Orient.

In Esperanto: "*La inteligenta persono lernas la interlingvon Esperanto rapide kaj facile. Esperanto estas la moderna, kultura, neutrala lingvo por la tuta mondo. Simple, fleksebla, praktika solvo de la problemo de internacia kompreno, Esperanto meritas seriozan konsideron.*"

Anglo-American promotion of Basic English is in direct contradition to those noble, egalitarian Charters of Freedom heretofore promulgated by Churchill and Roosevelt. Esperanto is the equitable and essential instrument for the realization of that First Freedom—"Freedom of Speech and Expression, Everywhere in the World." An epochal opportunity challenges American leadership—namely, the adoption and full application of Esperanto. This would inevitably redound to our more enlightened national self-interest. And it would usher in, I am convinced, a new era of global intercommunication and progress as epochal as the introduction of printing itself.

George A. Connor is a Delegate of the Esperanto International League, Member of the American Esperanto Academy.

A "Basic" Peace

RALPH de S. CHILDS

LAST winter, I taught some fifty English-speaking adult students in an evening class in Basic. Some wished to learn Basic to make more direct and simple their own English style or to use it as a teaching tool. Others wished to be able to communicate with people in foreign lands, particularly South America. Basic appealed to them as a medium for communicating with others whose native tongue was different, such as Spanish, Portuguese, French, or German, by learning only one language and not six or seven.

These students found the process of learning Basic fairly easy after they understood the theory on which the Basic words had been chosen. With this in mind it was not hard to guess whether or not a word would be on the list. The list was gradually learned through use rather than by rote memory. The vocabulary was not found to be too confining since the 850 words are augmented by four methods of extension: by being able to use them in all their meanings that are not to far from the root meaning; by being allowed to combine any words on the list, such as *with* and *out* to make *without;* by being allowed to add "ed," "ing," and "er" or "or" as an agent ending to words that take these endings in normal English; and by using a list of "international" words, such as hotel. There is nothing frozen or calcified about Basic, as some of its critics charge.

This very extension of the vocabulary which makes Basic less confining for the English-speaking person makes it much more difficult for the non-English-speaking. He must learn several meanings for each word, and often for a new word made up of two words on the list. He may be baffled by a string of simple words which together form a highly idiomatic English expression. Most of all he may be confused by our use of prepositions: we go downtown *by* the express train which goes *by* local stops in order to run *by* its schedule, or we fight *with* our allies in order to battle *with* our enemies. In order to make Basic as easy as possible for the foreigner, it is part of the duty of the English user of Basic to be as clear as possible in his use of prepositions and to be as un-idiomatic as possible. By doing this he will further the adoption of Basic in foreign lands.

No good end is won without work and ease of expression in an international language requires effort by both English and non-English-speaking learners. That effort is certainly pleasanter and less taxing than fighting a war. Many of us are convinced that the widespread knowledge of an international language, such as Basic, will be a potent factor in preserving peace in the future.

Ralph de S. Childs has taught Basic English at Cooper Union Institute in New York City.

G. K.

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON. By Maisie Ward. New York: Sheed & Ward. 1943. 685 *pp., with Index.* $4.50.

Reviewed by ANN F. WOLFE

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON was a Thomistic Dr. Johnson. He died in 1936 at the age of sixty-two. His great heart had long been saddened by the inevitability of World War II. Some twenty-five years ago he had warned: "But we shall come back to the place where we started, after another cycle of terror and torment and abominable butchery —and to a place where we might, in peace and perfect safety, stand firm today."

It is not entirely paradoxical that the dark mantle of prophecy should have fallen upon the spirit of the master of paradox. Surely no man's spirit was ever brighter with love of God, life, and man. It was not humanity that he loved, but each human being. As journalist and sociologist he poured out his prodigious energy in fighting the battles of the little man. As citizen and neighbor he practised the Distributism that he preached, recklessly giving of his time and money to help the poor and the causes of the poor.

Loving God, life, and man, he considered thanksgiving a duty and a joy. This sense of gratitude and his instinct for truth shine through his thought. They give his work the luminous quality that is inimitably Chesterton. His paradoxes and his puns are spark plugs of what Belloc calls the shock of illumination. Thomas Aquinas, wrote Chesterton, had "that instantaneous presence of mind which alone really deserves the name of wit." Chesterton had a genius for illustration shot through with that presence of mind.

—Drawn from life by S. J. Woolf.

Gilbert K. Chesterton

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It seems impossible to speak of Chesterton without leaning upon the overworked word "genius." As a somewhat distraught school boy he was characterized by one of his teachers as six feet of genius. Bernard Shaw, according to Lawrence of Arabia, called Chesterton a man of colossal genius. Poet, novelist, sociologist, philosopher, literary critic, and journalist, he wrote almost a hundred books, prefaces for as many others written by various authors, thousands of columns of literary criticism and journalism. He was an indefatigable lecturer. With his fellow Olympians, Belloc, Shaw, and Wells—to say nothing of a host of lesser logicians and meaner wits—he debated before innumerable fascinated audiences. It was his proudest boast to be a journalist; he made no claim to scholarship. Yet scholars acclaimed his "Victorian Age in English Literature," "Short History of England," and "Saint Thomas Aquinas"—to single out three of his widely varied subjects.

In "Gilbert Keith Chesterton" Miss Ward conceals no weaknesses and lets the giant strength speak for itself. The enviable happy boyhood when the Junior Debating Society engulfed bottomless pots of tea and took on the universe; exuberant Fleet Street where the water never got into the wine; the rapturous engagement and the perfect marriage; the patriotic fight against political corruption and the championship of freedom, the family and restoration of property; the inevitable conversion to Catholicism—every phase of Chesterton's life excites and endears. "Thank you for being alive," an admirer once wrote to him. The subject of Miss Ward's biography has the wind of life in his nostrils.

World Out of Nowhere

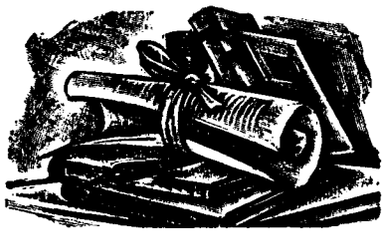
THE BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAIN. By Wallace Stegner. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1943. 515 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by
HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

IN a lean year this is a major novel. It would be a major novel even in a rich year, and the reasons lie in the quality of vitality, of generous strength, of something pressed down and running over in the new book by Wallace Stegner, that takes it completely out of the realm of intellectualism into the kingdom of fiction. The kings of fiction—at least the kings of English fiction—have ordinarily been open-handed monarchs, givers of manifold good things and careless about the minor morals of the muse. They have created vast, living, untidy books. "The Big Rock Candy Mountain" is a vast, living, untidy book. Whole sections of it, for example, can be lifted out; in fact, have been lifted out to appear as independent literary units. But the living force of the narrative, the large, loose curve of the story here hold them in embrace, and the reader knows only that a whole world has arisen out of nowhere around him.

"The Big Rock Candy Mountain" is the biography of Bo Mason, who grew up in the West (including western Canada) too late to be a pioneer and too early to be a politician. Trapshooter, gambler, bootlegger, real estate entrepreneur, and the like, he yet possesses the fascination and the repulsion of something original, elementary, and unpredictable. He is a cad and a hero, a swindler and a god. He marries a Norse wife, who bears him two sons. His profound and masculine egotism compels his wife to follow the adventure of his existence against her judgment, and alternately fascinates and disgusts his sons. We have his complete portrait, a dossier of events from childhood to the grave, a telling revelation of masculinity. But it remains a portrait, it never descends to become a case study. The author is steadily and sympathetically aware that his creation came too late into a world too old.

But to call this the substance of "The Big Rock Candy Mountain" is to do the book some injustice, inasmuch as it suggests that the novel is a conscious piece of psychological analysis, another performance by the fictional advanced guard. Bo Mason's life is, however, the occasion, not the thesis, of the book. The tale is a revelation of life in the contemporary West, a revelation without illusion and without bitterness and therefore credible and sweet. For Mr. Stegner the visible world exists. He knows the feel of a frozen radiator cap, the smell of baked clay, the look of a dead gopher, the flash of white skin at a necking party, the deadness of a shut-up shack. His boys live in a boy world, not in a projection of their parents' troubled existence. Only occasionally does the gulf open to show us the emotional tensions that slowly force father and children apart. This grasp of the normal and the sane, of what is visible and commonplace keeps the narrative in balance and compels us to accept as true the sudden spurts of cruelty that Bo Mason's impatience with dullness activates.



I have, to be sure, one major fault to find. That point of view should shift and change is, I think, normal in good English fiction, but I do not find Mr. Stegner's occasional use of differing styles quite acceptable. I prefer his direct report of act and thought to his occasional (and innocent) attempts to write like Thomas Wolfe. For example, towards the end of the novel, he drops into a stream-of-consciousness manner in an effort to acquaint us with the values Bruce, the younger son, has acquired, that jars with the geniality and strength of the rest of the narrative. The slow death of the mother, the blindness of the son to what the father feels and of the father to the suffering of the boy—all this is true and poignant in this part of the book, but it is true and poignant in spite of the way it is presented, not because of it.

"The Big Rock Candy Mountain" is not a conscious rediscovery of American values. Mr. Stegner is as amused at small-town cussedness as was Sinclair Lewis, but he knows that satire accomplishes nothing. In a larger sense, however, his book is an extraordinary study in American folkways. The language, the psychology, the customs of his characters are essential and characteristic, largely because, knowing them, he takes them for granted and does not dissect and analyze. His, to be sure, is a masculine world, just as, despite the tenderness with which the wife is treated, this is a masculine book. Possibly it is a study in an epoch that is dead. Reflecting on her husband's incapacity, Mrs. Mason talks to herself:

> What is your husband a slave to, Mrs. Mason? To himself, Mrs. Webb, to himself. To his notion that he has to make a pile, be a big shot, have a hundred thousand dollars in negotiable securities in his safety deposit box, drive a Cadillac car, have seven pairs of shoes with three-dollar trees for each pair, buy three expensive Panamas during a summer and wear a diamond worth fifteen hundred dollars in his tie. He doesn't know, he wouldn't know, what to do with money when he has it. Would he ever think of going to the theater, or reading a good book, or taking a trip somewhere just for the trip?

The worship of the bitch-goddess, Success, troubled Henry Adams. The case of Bo Mason is an object lesson in that cult reduced to the lowest, plainest, most masculine terms.

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"Speed" Hoover's Crime Fighters

THE F.B.I. IN PEACE AND WAR. By Frederick L. Collins. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1943. 297 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by JOHN ROY CARLSON

JOHN EDGAR ("Speed") HOOVER is a far-sighted man. He has anticipated tendencies toward the disrespect for law and order during war and post-war periods and authorized the publication of a definitive sketch of the crime-fighting successes of the Federal Bureau of Investigation from the time he took over in 1924. "The F.B.I. in Peace and War" is a stark reminder of its amazing thoroughness and efficiency. It is a timely, human, important book, deserving of the widest possible reading audience. The author, Frederick L. Collins, has been a personal friend of J. Edgar Hoover for many years and has been permitted entrée into the secrets of the F.B.I. But Mr. Hoover takes pains to point out in the Foreword that Mr. Collins's account is neither "controlled or censored."

Some may call the contents of "The F.B.I. in Peace and War" mostly "old stuff." But this reviewer found the contents both impressive and for the most part highly exciting reading, even though Collins's account smacks close at times to literal hero worship of "Speed" Hoover—as he was nicknamed in school—and adolescent admiration of his exploits on the crime front. This is understandable, however, and in no way detracts from the effectiveness of the work of the Bureau.

It is today the most extensive crime-fighting laboratory in the world. From a pre-war fingerprint file of 11,000,000, the total has now reached 75,000,000 (including an international exchange of prints from 89 countries) enabling the F.B.I. to thwart the plans of a Nazi spy who on December 7, 1941 tried to get the job of director of personnel in the Canal Zone, and a former inmate of San Quentin who tried to worm his way into the Marine Base at San Diego. During peacetime, the F.B.I. inspected 2,300 plants now engaged in war work and recommended means of preventing sabotage.

Great emphasis is laid on the selection of F.B.I. personnel. Out of a thousand applicants, usually from families of culture and some financial means, only one makes the grade of special agent. F.B.I. men are lawyers, accountants, have special training as engineers or chemists; in most cases they are required to be college graduates. Applicants are admitted after an intensive sixteen-week training period. From my numerous contacts with F.B.I. agents in the role of a citizen voluntarily turning over to the Bureau factual data on Nazi-Fascist groups, I can attest to the high calibre of the F.B.I. fraternity. Only merit counts. No political appointees, no nepotism, no favoritism—the bane of local law-enforcing agencies. Today 97 per cent of cases prepared by the F.B.I. result in conviction.

This is in drastic contrast to the old Bureau of Investigation under Harry Daugherty in the early twenties. At that time, even the notorious Boris Brasol, frustrated Czarist who introduced the "Protocols" as "truth" in this country, was able to get on the payroll of the Bureau of Investigation. When Hoover took over in 1924, politicians and flourishing gangsters called him a "Boy Scout Leader." Looked upon suspiciously by ward-heeling politicians, it wasn't until 1934 that the F.B.I. came into its own, following the "Kansas City Massacre" of an F.B.I. agent and several police by gangsters. In 1934 Congress and an up-to-that-time apathetic public finally gave it the power of arrest and right to carry firearms. Within a few years J. Edgar Hoover had mopped up Dillinger and solved a dozen kidnap and robbery "mysteries."

John Edgar Hoover

Many exciting and hitherto little publicized stories of crime solution dot the pages of "The F.B.I. in War and Peace." The latter portions of the book are devoted to fighting Axis enemy agents. The counter-espionage equipment at the start of World War I—one colonel, one captain, and an assistant—are contrasted to the present fifty-six extensively organized and closely coördinated field offices of the F.B.I. How all known Jap, Nazi, and Italian agents were locked up within thirty-six hours after Pearl Harbor and how wily Fritz Duquesne, Lilly Stein, Paul Fehse, and other Nazi spies were apprehended makes for exciting reading. The chapter on Jap spies is one of the most fascinating in the book.

Somewhat disappointing, in view of the completeness of other aspects of the work of the F.B.I., were the nine pages devoted to psychological warfare by native Americans. Author Collins realizes that "subversivists of native American origin who use Fascism as a cover for their even more reprehensible activities," are dangerous to the peace and security of a nation at war, and yet out of the hundreds engaged in seditious activity, only Pelley and a few others, five in all, receive mention. The dearth of apparent interest in the enemy within tends to give the book as a whole a rather "dated" tenor, inasmuch as it fails to emphasize the current organized efforts to sabotage the war effort by psychological means and the organized sabotaging of a democratic peace after the war. Quite rightly, Collins observes that only recently was the F.B.I. given the "go-sign to put them (native Fascist operators) through the wringer," and yet painfully little space is given to the work done by the F.B.I. in presenting Attorney General Biddle with data involving thirty-three alleged seditionists and saboteurs of our democracy.

"The F.B.I. in War and Peace" is valuable because it confirms to those who might be inclined to doubt that the F.B.I. is alert to every phase of the explosive situation at home. That it cannot always take action is understandable since it is an *investigating* body and not a prosecuting agency. I am convinced the F.B.I. has the measure of every native Quisling, potential and actual, and yet some of us must exercise undue patience until the day of more positive action against provable cases of treason. Collins ends his book by observing that like the top-flight gangsters, "persons upholding foreign ideologies" had been recruited "from what we like to feel is good old American stock. Quite as disturbing as their actual words and acts," he continues, "is the fact that Americans of this type can be convicted of an offense which, next to treason itself, is the foulest of political crimes. For espionage, even sabotage, when committed by aliens at the risk of life and limb, is understandable. But the native-born or naturalized citizen who attacks his own country from within is an untouchable."

John Roy Carlson is the author of "Under Cover."

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The Saga of H.M.S. Walney

SPRINGBOARD TO BERLIN. By John A. Parris, Jr., and Ned Russell, in collaboration with Leo Disher and Phil Ault. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 1943. 393 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by PERCIVAL R. KNAUTH

WHEN Leo Disher's grandchildren some day climb onto his knees, pull his white beard, and ask the inevitable question: "Grandpa, what did you do in the big war?" Disher will always have an answer ready. "Grandchildren," he can say, "I was in the toughest operation in North Africa you ever heard of." And if the wide-eyed kiddies, listening to his tale, think among themselves that the old boy is putting it on a bit thick, no one can blame them. For Leo Disher sailed into Oran harbor aboard H.M.S. *Walney* on the night of November 7, 1942, in one of the most incredible feats of daring that history has known. That the *Walney* failed is beside the point and, in the light of hindsight, easily understandable. But failure does not dim the glory of her mission and the cold courage of every man aboard her, including Leo Disher, in seeing it through to its bloody, blasting end. Those men were heroes.

The mission of the *Walney* was no more and no less than the capture of Oran and the French men o' war that lay there with the memory of a bitter, humiliating battle with the British three years before still eating at their hearts. The *Walney* was not a big ship; "she used to be the bloody old *Sebago* —an American coast-guard cutter." Now her thin skin was packed from end to end with men and ammunition, and on her bridge was a loudspeaker which, as she sailed into the habor, would call upon the French to yield Oran without a fight and join up in the Allied cause. If they did, all would be well. If they didn't—well, there were coastal batteries and all the guns on the French warships in the harbor which could be turned upon the *Walney*. They did turn on her—and she was not armored.

Leo Disher, correspondent of the United Press, went into Oran harbor on a pair of crutches with a plaster cast around one ankle. The *Walney*, a British ship, went in under the Stars and Stripes because General Giraud had been promised that no British would participate in the North African landings. The *Walney* had to break the boom across the mouth of Oran harbor and then cut loose with her loudspeaker. The rest was up to God and the Frenchmen on the warships and ashore.

The story of that terrible, hopeless mission makes by far the most exciting chapter in an exciting, tensely-written book. "Springboard to Berlin" is the combined work of four UP correspondents who, between them, saw just about every phase of the North African campaign. It is the kind of book that no one man alone could have written because a man can be in only one place at a time. But with four men collaborating you can get the story of the *Walney*, the story of the capture of Algiers, the landing on the coast near Casablanca—all simultaneous operations here put together in one book. That sort of thing makes for a broad perspective and for worthwhile reading.

This book covers the North African campaign from its earliest beginnings in England and the U. S. to its end on Cape Bon in Tunisia. John Parris and Ned Russell contribute most of it; Phil Ault a goodly share. All are what newspapermen call "hot reporters"; all of them saw plenty of action. The book is as complete a report as any we are likely to get until historians sit down and reconstruct the whole campaign. It is also very lively, written with the verve which American newspapermen seem to have made their own.

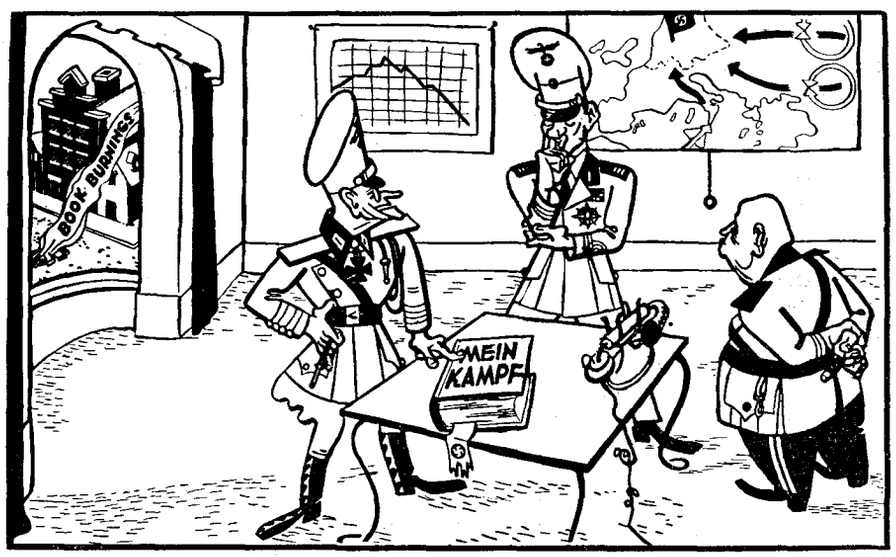
If anything, it is perhaps too lively, too imaginative in some spots. A fault of the book which cannot escape critical readers is its attempt to picture things which none of the reporters could possibly have seen, to reconstruct other events of which only bare outlines are yet known. For instance, in the Prologue:

> Pierre Laval rolled out of bed, dropped his feet to the floor, straightened his thick-set body and pulled on his pants. He put through a call to the Germans in Paris and then telephoned the old Marshal.
>
> The drowsing Nazi telephone operator on the Chancellery switchboard in Berlin jumped as if he had been shot as a dozen buzzers began buzzing at the same time.
>
> He looked at the clock. It was 2.30 a.m.

This sort of thing may be put down to journalistic license to make an exciting story more exciting—but in journalism license is limited by known facts. And such facts as were known were not always checked with the greatest care, as the story of General Giraud's escape will show. John Parris therein writes of a "mysterious French woman" who met Giraud on the Swiss frontier. "She had been given the task of leading him through Occupied France to Vichy." All very well, but Switzerland was on the frontier of Unoccupied France and Vichy within a couple of hours' train ride, so once Giraud got to Switzerland his troubles were just about over.

This form of over-excited narrative mars the book. It crops up here and there all through it—again, for instance, in the description of the scene around the conference table of the Admiralty Building in Oran when news of the landings reached the French. The patness of these stories makes you wonder what is true and what is imagination, and leaves you uncomfortable in the wondering.

But ignore that and you have a thrilling, well-told tale. The four men of the UP have done a good, well-coördinated job. All of them saw plenty of action, all of them have stories of great heroism full of the compelling flavor of war. They don't touch on the less romantic, less exciting, more miserable aspects of it. But it is good, red-blooded stuff. And for sheer courage Leo Disher's story of the *Walney's* action can take its place alongside anything I know. Probably the reason he didn't write more was because he had 26 bullet holes in him when he finally reached shore.



—*Bernstein in* PM

"Are you thinking what I'm thinking, General?"

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The Pattern of American Politics

AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTIES; Their Natural History. By Wilfred E. Binkley. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1943. 407 *pp., and index.* $3.75.

Reviewed by WILLIAM S. LYNCH

JOHN ADAMS'S oft-quoted dread that the Republic would divide into two great parties, an event "in my humble opinion . . . to be feared as the greatest political evil under our Constitution," never can fail to shock the modern reader. Today's American has been conditioned to accept party designations and battles as readily as he accepts such other natural American phenomena as chewing-gum and filling stations. For all the fears of Adams, shared, it should be said, by most of his contemporaries, the foundations of party government in America had already been laid in the conflict of mercantile-financial and independent farming interests that began in colonial times. This conflict brought about the crystallization of the opposing groups into the Federalist and Anti-Federalist parties that debated the ratification of the Constitution. Since then an unbroken succession of parties has constituted the main thread in the weaving of the political history of our nation.

Professor Wilfred E. Binkley, historian and political scientist, author of "Powers of the President," and winner of the 1942 Knopf Fellowship in History, traces now the development of these American political parties and brings the story down to tomorrow. For not content with reaching the present, he offers the Republicans some salutary and much-needed advice as to what they must do to justify their existence as a going concern in the immediate future. That of course is merely a brief epilogue to the main body of his book, which "is an essay at a natural history of American political parties." In it he has attempted to do two things in particular: "first . . . to ascertain and account for the social or group composition of each of our major political parties . . . second . . . to discover the part played by national political leaders in building these great group combinations. . . ."

Professor Binkley is first of all an historian, concerned with recording accurately and objectively the events as they transpired. He presents a complete and crowded account of the many parties that have appeared in American history, and of the men and women whose activities or ideas influenced or reflected political developments. At the same time his familiarity with the tools of the other social scientists, of the economist, the psychologist, and the sociologist permits him to make a penetrating analysis of his data and to answer Laswell's famous question to characterize politics, "Who gets what, when, how?"

An admirer of Beard, he rates economic motivation high as a determining factor in explaining why voters behave as they do. But like Beard, he knows how complex is the pattern of man's behavior and so his account is more than a dreary listing of the price of cotton and corn, rates of interest, and holdings of bonds. These are important, perhaps the most important single group of phenomena, but the religious convictions of the Presbyterians, the humanitarianism of the Abolitionists, the British lion tail-twisting proclivities, the rural distrust of urban Babylon, these too are factors that need to be considered, and Professor Binkley examines them with all their exciting details.

Primarily he sees the dynamics of politics in terms of interest-group combinations and the "perennial pattern of American party politics" in "the familiar practice of finding the formula that ends debate." Without exception American parties have always had to appeal to multiple interests and the most successful national politicians, Jefferson, Lincoln, the two Roosevelts have been astute opportunists who like Jackson could "by intuition scent the course the public mind would take." The familiar "states rights," "tariff protection," "implied powers," "loose construction," etc., have been shibboleths for editorial writers and speakers on the hustings, but the successful politicist has always sensed the economic and social ideologies beneath the phrase.

The author has produced a sound and satisfactory American political history. He has drawn on the latest scholarship to make it, perhaps, the most up-to-date single volume treatment of the subject. It will, therefore, appeal to the scholar and student. For the general reader it suffers from the overcomprehensiveness that makes it an excellent text and book of reference.

Seeing Things Through Tomorrow

WAR'S END AND AFTER. By Stuart Chevalier. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1943. 337 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by GEORGE N. SHUSTER

MR. CHEVALIER, a lawyer who has been about, disclaims special knowledge of the post-war world. He offers instead what purports to be the record of talks between three Americans who have done some reading and thinking about the desirable future attitude of the United States. The parties to the debate are supposed to vary in their views of politics and economics, but they get on together so famously and disagree so infrequently that the reader would soon be asleep were it not for the fact that the conversation is reasonably intelligent and to the point. Mr. Chevalier tells no secrets because he has none. But he manages to state the important issues clearly and to summarize current thought about them. He is hopeful about all but the ultimate problems. Whether mankind can muster the ethical energy to curb selfishness and war while not, on the other hand, succumbing to "dry rot" is a query he leaves unanswered. But on smaller problems such as social security he remains an optimist, having faith in particular in collective Anglo-American wisdom.

The book is valuable because it seems to reflect with a good deal of accuracy what the average practical and intelligent American has gathered from official and amateur comment on the peace. Mr. Chevalier feels that the United Nations have agreed not to hate, but on the other hand not to be "soft." The Atlantic Charter is meant to be taken seriously, even if it may be difficult to apply to the world of real men. Good morals and good business alike require that every effort be made to raise the standard of living throughout the world. It would be unwise to label some part of the world a "backward area" because just there a new attempt to threaten and conquer the world we defend might get under way. There is no use talking about "Socialism." Human society will have only two ideas left, one of which is Christianity while the other is Communism. Perhaps in due time these two may merge. That is, Christianity may develop a more practical social outlook while Communism may repent of its one-sided concern with material things. Mr. Chevalier lays much stress on spiritual values, and his book may perhaps be termed a liberal Protestant attempt to see things through. It is unpretentious but for that reason conceivably more valuable to the average citizen than are some of the ultra-dogmatic treatises now being produced in abundance.

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The Passion of a Naturalist

UNDER A LUCKY STAR. A Lifetime of Adventure. By Roy Chapman Andrews. New York: Viking Press. 1943. 300 pp. $3.

Reviewed by WALDEMAR KAEMPFFERT

UNLIKE other boys Dr. Andrews, naturalist, explorer, physician, and former director of the American Museum, knew exactly what he wanted to be when he was a boy in Wisconsin. Strange animals and strange lands were even then his passion. He decided to be an explorer and a naturalist. And an explorer and a naturalist he became.

Romantic ambition is one thing, realizing is another. With Andrews the ambition was reinforced by energy and will power. Through luck and pertinacity he got a menial job at forty dollars a month in the taxidermy department of the American Museum of Natural History. His progress was rapid. After the usual college and university education, which gave him the scientific grounding that he needed, and after a brief apprenticeship as a taxidermist he began to hunt whales for the American Museum. He made the acquaintance of whales in unfamiliar seas; he studied and mounted whales; he made himself an outstanding authority on whales. The whale-hunting episodes are full of zest and excitement, with many hairbreadth escapes, and with many terse descriptions of the *mores* of Pacific Islanders, Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans, not to mention geisha girls and Madame Jesus's notorious house of prostitution, "Number Nine," in Yokohama. He was more than an observer. So intimately did he weave himself into his surroundings that he even learned Japanese. Life meant more than science to him. He enjoyed the discomforts of peasants and the delights of aristocrats, knew every good hotel and restaurant in the Orient, experimented on himself with cocaine, hashish, opium, and morphia and ate and drank about everything that was new to him. In him the bon viveur and the scientist are perfectly blended.

If Andrews had wanted to be a promoter he could probably have made his mark in finance. His expeditions were sometimes so expensive that the American Museum could not finance them entirely. And so he had to raise much money himself. He went about the business much as if he were selling stock in an oil-well. Strange to say business men were enthralled, even though they knew that they were bidding their money farewell. Perhaps it would not be so easy in these days of heavy income and inheritance taxes to fire the imagination of a banker or a corporation president. In the brave decade that preceded World War I when Andrews went around with his hat in his hand, millionaires had money to burn. Andrews made full use of the prevailing mood.

The high spot of the story is the expedition to the Gobi Desert, which cost $250,000 and which resulted in the discovery not only of dinosaur bones but, what is much more important, of dinosaur eggs millions of years old. It was one of the richest finds in paleontological history. When the eggs were exhibited the American Museum of Natural History was packed like a subway train in the rush hour, and Andrews became a figure of national importance. He might have sold the syndicate rights to his egg story for $250,000, but restrained himself because of the possible injury to the reputation of the Museum, a city institution.

An explorer likes to poke in odd corners of the world. Hence the Germans were not slow to use their scientists in collecting information that might be eventually of military use, especially in the Far East. Though Andrews must have seen enough that was of importance and though he probably told enough to our Government it was not until World War I that he became an out-and-out Naval Intelligence officer. From what he says there is little doubt that we are now profiting by what he then observed, though his lips are sealed. What he does tell of the way the Japanese broke down Chinese morale with opium, and of the massacres of Chinese and Mongolians by Bolshevist troops is about as frightful as anything that has come out of this war.

—Portrait by Christie

Roy Chapman Andrews

This is a book not for the scientist but for the general reader. Hence the explorer who wishes to follow in Andrews's footsteps will receive no practical advice. Because he is a scientist Andrews is more modest than he ought to be, despite his account of perils survived. Possibly his narrative would have gained if he had given us not only a record of adventures but something like a psychological self-portrait, a true autobiography. But there is no doubt that his book is good, and even exciting reading, even though he denies that he is a writer. He may not be a literary artist, but he knows how to present his facts effectively and simply because he is unpretentious.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

THREE-WORD QUOTATIONS

Printed below are 20 three-word sentences which have been lifted out of as many well-known poems. Can you match up each sentence (after making a mental jump to identify the poem from which it was taken) with the poet who wrote it? Allowing 5 points for each correct answer, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, and 80 or better is excellent. The answers are on page 29.

1. All smiles stopped.	( ) Robert Browning
2. Distinctly I remember.	( ) Samuel Taylor Coleridge
3. Drink to me.	( ) Ralph Waldo Emerson
4. Go, lovely Rose!	( ) Oliver Goldsmith
5. Goodbye, proud world.	( ) Thomas Gray
6. He prayeth best.	( ) Ben Jonson
7. I never writ.	( ) John Keats
8. Know then thyself.	( ) Henry W. Longfellow
9. Learn to labor.	( ) Dorothy Parker
10. Melancholy marked him.	( ) Edgar Allan Poe
11. No birds sing.	( ) Alexander Pope
12. Nothing beside remains.	( ) William Shakespeare
13. Rivers are damp.	( ) Percy Bysshe Shelley
14. Rural virtues leave.	( ) Ernest Lawrence Thayer
15. Somewhere children shout.	( ) Edmund Waller

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LITERARY RECONSTRUCTION FOR TOMORROW

IT is with a sick heart, even if with a mind acquiescent to the military necessity, that lovers of Italy—and who that has ever set foot in that gracious land but is its lover?—watch the devastation that has already taken place there and fear the worse that may yet betide. Even Mussolini's innovations had left his cities in the main such as generations of travellers had known them, and the gentle encroachments of progress which had taken place before his time were hardly more than light trimming for the past. Though, before the First World War, the old-timer might deplore the advancing tide of change which had modernized sections of large towns where utilitarian needs had crowded out picturesque inconvenience or big business had elbowed aside quaint vestiges of a simpler era; or might sigh that modern sanitation had cleared up cluttered villages and with them a colorful huddle of outwardly charming and inwardly slovenly homes; or bemoan the fact that motor boats chugged alongside the gondolas of Venice, yet by and large the face of his Italy, and indeed the face of Europe in general was what it had been for many generations of bygone sightseers.

The First World War, of course, damaged or laid in ruins some of the noble edifices of the past, and changed the lovely landscape of the battle regions to a desolation where rubble and barbed wire enclosed fields plowed by cannon and planted with graves. But by the time the present conflict broke out nature had reclothed the scarred countryside in beauty, and man had succeeded in repairing much of the damage to his own works. For the most part the great cities stood intact, and the great monuments were restored.

But now a more devastating war is wreaking new havoc, and whole localities have been bombed into fragments. The London, the Hamburg, the Cologne, and Cassel, the lovely Taormina and friendly Frascati of ante-war days have gone with the wind, and however much more stately the towns that renew them may be they will still be cities of a new age and not of the past.

Our own Government, and doubtless the governments of our allies as well, has already taken cognizance of the danger that confronts art and history in wide areas traversed by war by the appointment of a commission which is to explore the damage that has been wrought and act to preserve and restore whatever can be salvaged after the peace. An immense labor and a noteworthy work, this that lies before it, and one which the conscience of the civilized world must support. Of its intricacy the uninitiate can have small grasp, but the undertaking must certainly command the good will of all whose imagination has been exalted in the past by the magnificent achievements of human kind. That art in the form of painting and sculpture may be safe and recovered from those who unjustly have come into possession of it, and retrieved intact from the secret places in which it has been stored for the duration of the conflict, we may all hope. But what of the cities, the Nurembergs, the Napleses, the lesser towns that have been shattered and burned? They can live again as they were of old only in pictures and in books.

In the days before spreading transportation facilities had made voyaging general, travel was the privilege of the few and the many relied for their conception of foreign parts on the reports of those more fortunate than themselves in being able to go abroad. The literature of the past is full of detailed description of places and scenes, of minute accounts of the appearance of landscape and buildings, read once with avidity but become stale and unprofitable to a world which had gone to see for itself. This old painstaking literature is assuming a new value of a sudden, for in it lies embalmed a world that is vanishing. Here in these books, as in the photographs and film pictures of the scenes they depict, is, as it were, a museum of the past to which the traveller of the future will turn with curiosity and the student repair for information. It is one of the curious twists of fate that a fashion of writing which the advance of progress had robbed of effectiveness should be restored to interest by the devastation of war. And it is a consolation, if a melancholy consolation, that some of the beauty and picturesqueness which has been bombed out of existence can still live on in literature. **A. L.**

In Space the One Great Ornament

By Louise Townsend Nicholl

IN Space the one great ornament
Of sounds enlaced, coincident,
Three simultaneous tones recur,
And I the only listener. . . .
Reverberating through my sleep
From very far, from very deep,
A new creation, new conceived,
A Chord, achieved!

I woke, and it was May and it was morning.
The chime I heard,
The sweet attuned clash,
Was bird,
Was thrush,
His song my sleep adorning.

Oh, it was heaven to wake and in the waking
Surprise one heaven to another breaking,
To move from world to world so instant near
I carried the eternal in my ear—
A crystal globe meticulously cloven,
Its prismed lusters trembling interwoven,
The phrase immaculate in archetype
From which all consonance derives its shape,
A unity divided then restored
By shards which ring together in a chord.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Is Germany Incurable?"—Cont.

SIR: It is difficult to conceive any possible justification of the appearance in your columns—five of them—of the letter by Harry Elmer Barnes in your issue of September 18.

Out of many possible comments, we offer two:

First. As a climax to his criticism of the letter previously published by you from six eminent psychiatrists, Mr. Barnes accuses those scientists of being themselves paranoiacs—as he puts it, "attributing to others the symptoms or disorder from which one is himself suffering." That this cheap and vulgar jibe should be given space in *The Saturday Review* is an insult to your readers, and deserves the severest condemnation from all who are properly concerned with the honor and dignity of American literature.

Second. Mr. Barnes describes the Germans as being "sandwiched between powerful enemies and frequently invaded by them." He says further, "The historical propagandists in Germany such as Treatschke (*sic*) were never accorded much respect by their academic colleagues." And, "Prussia ranks very low among the great nations of the world in warlike activities and proclivities throughout history."

We rub our eyes, but they still pop with incredulity and astonishment. It is not surprising, in view of Barnes's record, that he should attempt desperately to ignore the extent to which events have discredited both his scholarship and his sense. But that *The Saturday Review* should open its columns to statements which are not only in violent contradiction to the settled opinion of nearly all reputable American historians, but are also the favorite lines of the propaganda of the enemy with whom we are at war—that, surely and demonstrably, is an unforgivable offense against America and all Americans.

CECIL BROWN,
HENRY STEELE COMMAGER,
CARL VAN DOREN,
CLIFTON FADIMAN,
WILLIAM L. SHIRER,
REX STOUT.

Authorization for the signatures of the above to this letter are held by me.

(Signed) REX STOUT.

SIR: I may be mistaken, but is not the author of the letter in your September 18, 1943, issue (p. 13) "Is Germany Incurable?" the same person who wrote so extensively over a period of years after the First World War to prove that the Allies were a bunch of knaves and that Germany was an innocent victim villainously set on by them? Is he not the person who thus helped develop a powerful Germany that set out only a few years ago on another attempt to conquer the world—including the United States of America? If so, why is anything on any subject written by him safe to listen to? And why should a publication like *SRL* yield up to him nearly two pages of precious space?

R. W. PENCE.

Greencastle, Indiana.

EDITOR'S NOTE: It is the quintessence of banality to say it, but say it again we shall: The letter columns of this magazine represent and will continue to represent, as they should, a wide range of viewpoint and opinion. With special reference to the two letters above, we believe we were right in publishing Mr. Barnes's letter as part of the extended correspondence we have been running on "Is Germany Incurable?" by Dr. Richard M. Brickner. We do not select letters on the basis of their being "safe to listen to." We like to think that the convictions of our readers are not so crumbly that they will disintegrate the first time some one cries "Boo!" We would publish a letter from Adolf Hitler or from the Devil himself as part of a forum on Germany or any other subject, provided that they do not conflict with the postal laws as they relate to obscenity.

It should be unnecessary, moreover, for the editors to point out that they hold no brief for Mr. Barnes or for his views, as readers familiar with the editorials in this magazine well know. For those who are not familiar with our opinion as it concerns the subject of Nazi Germany, we summarize it herewith:

We disagree with and indeed condemn the argument that all Germans are and always have been the same, that militarism and aggressiveness have been baked into their blood over a thousand years, that the only time the world will be at peace will be when Germany is sown with salt or with the decaying bones of many millions of corpses to be produced by a purge of our making.

We do not believe that the German people constitute a separate racial entity apart and aside from the rest of the world, any more than we place stock in the race theories of the Nazis themselves. We believe that Nazism as a political doctrine or philosophy is by no means the exclusive property or hallmark of Germans, that there are today in America as elsewhere persons, some of them in prominent places, who represent Nazism at its worst. In short, we view Nazism as a lateral world doctrine but with its focus and center of eruption in Berlin.

We believe that the eruption must be stamped out wherever it shows itself, as we pointed out in an editorial two weeks ago ("The Nazi Teacher After the War," Sept. 25), but we believe we shall fail in this if we say that Nazism and Germans are forever inseparable, that you cannot exterminate the one without exterminating the other. The chief trouble with extermination as a definitive "solution" to the German ques-

"Now tell the nice lady how sorry you are for what you did to her little book."

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tion, as we see it, is that it couldn't be carried out without provoking a civil war within the United States itself. Moreover, the question of extermination is academic. The question before us is not whether there will be Germans, but whether there will be good ones or bad ones.

How, then, are we going to stamp out the eruption? To a certain extent, we believe this question will be taken out of our hands once the war ends, as retributive justice sets in and as the millions of homeless and beaten surge into Germany for the pounds of flesh for which they have been waiting. To a larger extent, the question may be handled after they are defeated in this war by the Germans themselves, whose place in the postwar world should be made dependent not only upon their ability to rid themselves of the disease of Nazism, inside and out, but upon their ability to contribute constructively to the community of nations. N. C.

SIR: I have only now had a chance to read the interesting argument *The Saturday Review of Literature* has published on the question "Is Germany Incurable?" I am myself a German, who escaped to freedom as late as summer 1937. I have had a standard German education. I find myself in complete disagreement with Dr. Brickner. I think Dr. Kallen comes nearer to the facts.

The present dispute about "curing" or "re-educating" Germany is not new. It began years ago in Germany. One of the foremost objectives of the Weimer Republic had been the education of the people for democracy, tolerance, and peace. Numerous articles on this topic were published in professional and cultural magazines; pamphlets were circulated, endless discussions took place. The inquiry started long before anyone knew how or when the downfall would happen or even seriously planned for it.

German people pondering the problem before and after Hitler's Government were bewildered, not because they were faced with a "paranoic streak" in the German nature, but with the split between power and culture in Germany. Unlike most other nations, Germany had attained her highest cultural achievements in times of political weakness, whereas her periods of political power have been, on the whole, periods of cultural inertia. Prussia has been extremely efficient in the forming of the State, but the muse rarely visited the Prussian soil. The South of Germany, where classical Latin traditions blended with French and Italian influences, has been fertile in culture but sterile in political organization. Napoleon organized the South German States, Bismarck forged their inclusion in the Reich.

Neither book nor boot symbolize "the true Germany;" they do symbolize the historic conflict between the humane and the brutal forces in Germany. It is quite significant that old Hindenburg, whose election to the Presidency of the Republic marks the regaining of power by the "boots," boasted once that he never had read a book except the Bible, a statement which is certainly less an appreciation of the Book of Books, than a scorn of book-reading.

The intellectual originators of Nazism are not Chamberlain or Gobineau or other nationalistic writers. Nazism has its origin outside the intellectual sphere. Very few people moreover have ever read Chamberlain or the others, and even the second-hand output of their ideas by teachers, orators, and journalists reached a relatively small group of the population only. The books which really influence people are those which they actually read. During the Republic the books most widely read by all the classes of the population were war-novels and stories centering around the problems of the slums. People read books because they wanted to check and clarify their own disturbing experience, seeking consciously or unconsciously for the catharsis which tragedy of war, defeat, and social disaster involve.

The war books, those of Remarque, Renn, Glaser, Zweig, had a strong pacifist tendency; social novels sided with the underprivileged. Opposition to this type of literature came in the form of political violence by the marching public; the Nazi-inspired disturbances of the performances of a picture based on Remarque's "All Quiet on the Western Front." However, there emerged tendencies among the "reading population," especially among the young people in the Youth Movement (among the so-called bourgeois and the labor youth alike) to turn away from photographic realism to pure art. It brought about a renaissance of poets like Hoelderlin and Novalis, and minds opened to the sensitiveness and delicate art of the living poet Rainer Maria Rilke. Among the best sellers of this period, Grimm's "Volk ohne Raum" has been probably the only one which really fitted in the Nazi-ideology. During the Third Reich the bulk of books, borrowed from libraries and bought in bookshops, were the old classics and old historic and biographical works.

This means two things: First, that the book-reading population refuted the new Nazi literature; second, that nothing of the modern pre-Hitler literature was left after the book-burning.

These facts may awaken the hope

that after the physical defeat of Nazidom the underground continuity of German culture will guarantee that when "the boot" will be destroyed, the book will dominate again. The question is whether the cultural section of the German people will be willing and able to take over the government and to control the "marching population," which has grown in numbers during the "Third Reich." Twice in modern times cultural Germany had the chance of political leadership. Both times it failed. First, with the National Assembly of 1848, the so-called Parliament of Professors; second, with the Weimar Republic, where the Democratic Party, founded in 1919 and including most of the intellectual leadership in Germany, was the first party to dwindle away, and soon became a party of leaders without followers.

Is the present opposition against Hitler better equipped to take the leadership of the Fourth Reich? This opposition is not class-bound, it is to be found in variable numbers in all social groups—even among the much despised Junkers and industrialists—and it is not more numerous among workingmen than others. A minority of this opposition is organized, or what one commonly calls Underground Movement. Up to the outbreak of the war —and no one really knows anything about the development during the war —this underground has been, although a highly heroic, a by no-means activist group. Its main undertakings consist in extending help to persecuted members and non-members, gathering information and bringing this information to the knowledge of the outside world, educating its membership by reading and discussing in small groups, preparing and distributing "illegal" material, and, as already has been mentioned, laying plans for the after-Hitler period. The Underground is founded on the strong belief in Socialism, in Christianity, in Pacifism. If it has any national orientation at all, it aims toward a Fourth Reich expressing these ideals, but the Reich is subordinated to the ideal.

The Underground, politically, is not a national movement. The larger unorganized part of the opposition consists mainly of people who are ashamed of the country, disgusted and bitter, hate the collective spirit and "the masses." To them freedom is an entirely individualistic conception. This opposition will be of little assistance in overthrowing the Nazi Government, but it is apt to strengthen the old German tradition that "political song is ugly song," the aloofness of cultural Germany from the political life of the nation.

This is seemingly a hopeless attitude with regard to the establishment of lasting civilized government in Germany. What is it due to? A lack of common sense, an unreadiness to deal with things as they are? Does this explain why a country of high culture has fallen prey to brute force? The truth seems to be that the reality of German ideals and the form of culture to which the many intellectual streams

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in Germany move, do not correspond with the political organization set up by Bismarck. Germany's cultural tradition, German idealism, are essentially European. They find their political expression in a European organization. When solely German, they are cut off from their roots, unable to resist the treading boot. Other European countries are more or less in the same situation.

Thus dismemberment is no cure for Germany; nor is the division in small states for Europe. These will breed un-European Pan-nationalisms to cross unnatural borders established by force. A collectively planned European organization seems the one agency which can draw European culture into the political soil of the continent, and safeguard a peaceable civilization.

JULIE MEYER.

New School for Social Research,
New York City.

Do Nations Ever Go Mad?

SIR: Apropos of the discussion in your columns over Dr. Richard M. Brickner's arresting book, "Is Germany Incurable?" an appeal to history and philosophy may throw some light on the question of the sanity of peoples.

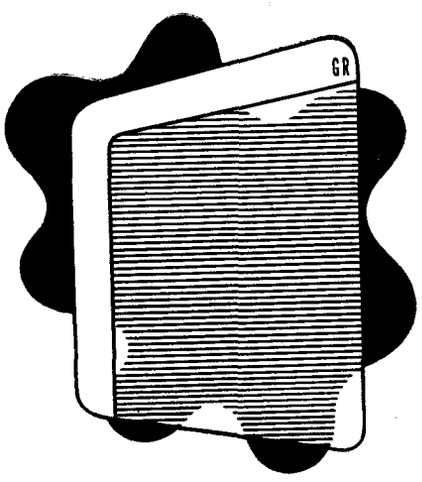
"Why might not whole communities and public bodies be seized with fits of insanity, as well as individuals!" said the celebrated Bishop Butler. "Nothing but this principle, that they are liable to insanity, can account for the major part of those transactions of which we read in history."

The Prophecy

"One who witnessed the Presidential campaign of 1840 would have supposed that the whole world had run mad, and rushed into the wild contest on the sublime issues, that log-cabins are the best of buildings, hard-cider the most delicious of drinks, and coonskins the finest of all furs," said Albert Taylor Bledsoe. Standing on the streets of Springfield, Illinois, and witnessing the frenzy of the people, "it seemed to him as if Pandemonium had been let loose upon earth. Reason was everywhere reeling in the storm, and madness ruled the masses." Speaking to his friend, Abraham Lincoln, about this exhibition of insanity, he "ventured to express his mortification that the Whig Party, which had claimed a monopoly of all the intelligence and decency of the country, should descend to the use of such means."

"It is all right," replied Mr. Lincoln; *"we must fight the devil with fire; we must beat the Democrats, or the country will be ruined."* (Italics Bledsoe's.)

The quiet young lawyer-philosopher looked at his friend searchingly, and said: *"Why not fight him with light?* What is this but the old, corrupt, and all corrupting maxim, that we 'must do evil that good may come?' According to the greatest man who has ever lived, it is precisely the ruling maxim



or sentiment of those men 'whose damnation is just.' No, sir; this maxim, and the means it dictates, can never save the country. They may defeat the Democrats and lead to party success, but they will ruin the country. Even now they demoralize, debase, distract and bewilder the moral sense of the country, and prepare it for destruction. Nay, they demoralize its very soul, and let loose its passions to scourge a guilty land; and then, when the fullness of time shall come, our damnation, too, will be just."

"Mr. Lincoln looked very grave, but said nothing." Bledsoe noted.

The Fullfilment

In the Spring of 1861, the noted Union lawyer of Charleston, James L. Petigru, was in Columbia, attending the Supreme Court. At that time all of South Carolina's State institutions were located at the Capital. A stranger stopped Mr. Petigru on the streets and asked him: "Where is the Insane Asylum?" The great lawyer pointed to the North, then to the South, to the East and then to the West, and went on his way without saying a word.

The Aftermath

Those of us who lived through the Presidential campaign of 1896, and worked at our trade of news reporting, will never forget the madness generated by that memorable political contest. It was 1840 and 1860 repeating themselves.

Did the Germans think up what has been going on in the world these past ten years?

DAVID RANKIN BARBEE.

Washington, D. C.

Lamartine Redivivus

SIR: It may be interesting to some of your readers in connection with M. Lamartine's letter concerning women's devotion to fashion, their blind following of what fashion has prescribed, to learn that Sren Kierkegaard anticipated him nearly a hundred years ago. This is only one of the things which make the newly discovered Danish philosopher so modern. I quote extracts from the malicious speech of the Ladies' Tailor at the Banquet in "In Vino Veritas," from "Stages on Life's Way":

"No, I know woman on her weak side, that is to say, I know her. I shun no terror in the pursuit of my studies and shun no measures calculated to confirm what I have understood. For I am a madman, and one must be mad in order to understand her, and if one was not mad before, he must be so when he has understood her. . . . One hour in my *maison* is worth more than a year and a day outside of it if one wants to learn to know woman. I say in my *maison,* for it is the only one in the capital of Denmark, no one would think of competing. Who would dare to risk competition with one who has sacrificed himself completely, and continues to sacrifice himself as the high priest of this idolatrous worship? No, there is not a distinguished company where my name is not mentioned first and last, there is no middle-class company where my name, when it is mentioned, does not inspire holy awe like the name of the King, and there is no costume so crazy that, when it is from my *maison*, is not accompanied by whispers as it walks through the salon. . . . To me it is a rapture beyond compare to bring out the most costly fabrics, to cut them up, to clip pieces out of genuine Brussels lace to make a fool's motley . . . From my *maison de mode* has gone out to the world of elegance the glad tidings for every lady of distinction that fashion commands the use of a special sort of headdress when one goes to church, and again that the headdress must be somewhat different for high mass and for evensong. . . .

"You think perhaps that only ladies in high society do homage to fashion. Far from it. Just look at the seamstresses, upon whose toilet I spare no pains in order that the dogmas of fashion may be emphatically proclaimed from my *maison.* They compose a chorus of nitwits, and I, the high priest, go before them as a shining example, prepared to squander everything, if only by the help of fashion I may make every woman ridiculous. For when a seducer boasts that every woman is vendible to the right bidder, I do not believe him, but I do believe that before long every woman will be satanized by the crazy and defiling self-reflection of fashion which depraves her more thoroughly than if she were to be seduced. . . . Since woman has reduced everything to fashion, I by the aid of fashion will prostitute her as she deserves. I do not rest, I the Ladies' Tailor; my soul chafes when I think of my task; she must yet come to wearing a ring in her nose. Therefore seek no sweetheart, renounce love as you would avoid the most dangerous neighborhood, for your sweetheart, too, will have to come to wearing a ring in her nose."

MRS. DAVID F. SWENSON.

Minneapolis, Minn.

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TRADE Winds

THE HEROINE of Laura Hobson's new novel, "The Trespassers," is in love with one of the most unlikely recipients of a damsel's affections you will encounter in the fiction world this year: A ruthless, high-powered egomaniac who doesn't care how many people he has to crush to reach his notion of the pinnacle of success. He probably is a composite portrait of some of the tycoons Mrs. Hobson herself has mixed up with in her busy and varied career at Batton, Barton, Durstine and Osborne, the *Post*, Altman's, *Time*, and Lord knows where else. . . . This has been Harry Hansen's week for feeling sorry for himself. "You won't believe me," he laments, "but there are boys and girls in college who actually hope to become book reviewers. They think of reviewing as just a lot of fun with books you like. Alas, let them be warned in time. We reviewers have to tolerate characters that go in for pregnancy, sterility, homosexuality, and incest, and report on them to our public. We put the best face on it that we can, but you don't see us leaving the books around on our living room tables!" . . .

BOOK REVIEWERS have had just a soft touch recently in comparison to the New York drama critics. First, Owen Davis served up a moronic little thing called "The Snark Was a Boojum." Statisticians proclaimed it his 305th play. It combined all the worst features of the other 304. Still shaky at the knees from this ordeal, the critics were summoned next to an exhibit sponsored by Mr. Irving Caesar, called "My Dear Public." This was so unbelievably bad that even the most articulate reviewers were left floundering for words, and sought refuge in remarks like: "We have come to bury

Caesar, not to praise him." . . . As an indication of a punch-drunk public's unprecedented craving for a little amusement, I saw numerous people actually going back for a second act of "My Dear Public" of their own free will. . . .

VINCENT STARRETT recalls one of the funniest incidents in the late Frank Harris's alleged autobiography, that amazing three-volume conglomeration of literary lore and sophomoric pornography that under-the-counter specialists peddle for as much as fifty dollars a set. Harris described a crucial international conference with all the wealth of detail that only a man who had not been present could supply. At the height of the confab an English munitions king let out a cry of anguish. His valuable time-piece had been hooked. The chairman—prime minister of a great European power—was properly outraged. "Gentlemen," he declared icily, "this will never do. The lights will be extinguished for five minutes. All of us will file out of this chamber in darkness. The thief, as he exits, will place the watch on the table there beside the door, where the buhl clock now stands." Thereupon, concluded Harris, the delegates filed out in silence and darkness. Five minutes later the room was relighted. Not only was the watch still missing; the buhl clock also had disappeared!

Frank Harris had just made his exit from the New York literary scene in 1923, when I got my first job in a publishing house. Embittered and in dire financial straits, he had taken himself off to the South of France, where he stayed until his death eight years later, convinced to the end that he was the world's most unappreciated genius. He was a boor and a blowhard. He dressed and acted like a tinhorn gambler. Oscar Wilde noted that he was "invited to all the great houses in London—*once!*" (Harris paid him back for this, and other taunts, in a brilliant but inaccurate biography.) Yet people who could put up with his eccentricities considered Frank Harris one of the keenest judges of literature of his generation. In his heyday he edited *The London News, The Fortnightly,* and *The Saturday Review.* He always claimed that he discovered George Bernard Shaw. Shaw denied this, but when Harris undertook a biography of Shaw as his last major literary effort, and bogged down in the middle of it, Shaw, in an uncharacteristic burst of generosity, edited the script himself, correcting a hundred misstatements and filling in countless gaps. It was rumored at the time that what part of the final manuscript was not Shaw's own contribution had been written by Frank Scully, but all parties concerned decline to substantiate the tale.

Harris was supported in his last years by indulgent American tourists, who bought volumes of "curiosa" from him for admittedly exorbitant sums, and fed his ego by pretending to believe his preposterous reminiscences. When Donald Klopfer visited him in 1930, he insisted on reading aloud his latest short story. In the middle of it, he burst into violent sobs, announced: "This is the greatest short story ever written," and staggered from the room. He was waiting at the exit gate, however, all smiles again, with "My Life and Loves" under his arm when the Klopfers departed. Don paid him four hundred lira for the volumes; swapped

them in Paris for an autographed copy of Ludwig Lewisohn's "The Case of Mr. Crump," which he lost in a taxicab a few moments later. . . .

DEVOTEES of the late Don Marquis will be pleased to hear that that superlatively good actor, Charles Coburn, plans a Broadway production of "The Master of the Revels" next Spring, and that Doubleday, Doran have published a wartime edition of the imperishable "archy and mehitabel." . . . Watch for an epidemic of pin-up books in the Spring. Shortage of paper is all that has held up a half dozen of them this season. . . . Three out of every four spy stories now in search of a publisher are accompanied by a note explaining "this is ideal material for Humphrey Bogart and Sydney Greenstreet!" Last year it was Alfred Hitchcock. . . . Churchill's speech caused a sudden demand for Richards's "Basic English and Its Uses." . . . The two liveliest items on the new Princeton University Press list are Ed Earle's "Makers of Modern Strategy" and Tannehill's "Weather Around the World." Both have first printings of 10,000. Tannehill's "Hurricanes," published in 1938, sold 700 copies in four years, then sailed through four revised editions in the following eighteen months! Army and Navy demand, of course. . . . If P. G. Wodehouse can ever tear himself away from Berlin long enough to return to America, he'll find a tax bill of $21,328 waiting for him at the dock, not to mention a little item of $17,382 for penalties and interest. . . .

LIN YUTANG has embarked upon a foreign mission that will take him far from home (*you* guess!) for many months. Regardless of the dangers he will encounter, he will never come closer to disaster than he did a few Sundays back. Dr. Lin, his wife, and his three children were aboard the Congressional Limited when it was wrecked outside of Philadelphia. They escaped with a severe shaking up. Five minutes earlier they had returned to

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"Richard, lieber Richard, Der Fuehrer wants to know about that 'Rule Britannia' overture!"

their seats from the diner, where a dozen passengers were crushed and scalded in the crash. . . . Roy Howard also escaped injury in the same wreck. . . . Henry Giersburg, long a fixture at Putnam's, is now at Brentano's Fifth Avenue store. The sixth Brentano branch in Washington has just been opened in the Pentagon Building. All you have to do is find it. . . . Walter Winchell reported on a once-famous English author whose luck in Hollywood had deserted him. "Since he's lost his stake," said Walter, "half his friends don't talk to him." "How about the other half?" he was asked. "They," was the reply, "don't know it yet!" . . .

CHRIS MASSIE, author of "The Green Circle," writes that just after the armistice of the last war, when the Germans were moving out of France, and the British were following on their heels, his brother Douglas, with the First Division, was amazed at the variety of flags which were being displayed in the French villages. Besides the French, Belgian, American, and British emblems, there were Italian and even Japanese flags. He wondered that such a stock should be on hand, and asked a Frenchwoman about it. She smiled and replied, "The Germans brought them down in trucks before they went away, and sold them to us for five francs apiece!" "The economic war had begun," comments Massie, "and the Germans were setting about winning it even before their defeated soldiers were off the battlefield! Let's see to it together that they don't have the chance to play that sort of game again!" . . .

FRANK GERVASI says that, if he ever writes a book about Greece, he's going to call it "Death and Metaxas." . . . Inspired suggestion from a Des Moines bookseller: a Shotgun Edition of "Ideal Marriage." . . . Ring Lardner liked to tell his friends of an eccentric in the Adirondacks who constructed a building entirely of knot-holes. "What kinda holes do you call dese?" asked a visiting Brooklynite. "They are knot-holes," said the builder. "Hmphh," persisted the Brooklynite. "Dey look like holes to me!" . . . "This dog," Mr. Weber once said to Mr. Fields, "is worth five hundred dollars." To which Mr. Fields replied, "How could a dog save that much money?" . . . Henry Morgenthau introduced Bob Hope on the radio as "the funniest man in the world." "Thank you, Mr. Morgenthau," responded Hope, and added "Say, that's the first time I've ever said *that!* Up till now, it's always been 'You're welcome, Mr. Morgenthau!'" . . . And Cecil Brown passes on the story of the correspondent's daughter who landed a Government job in Washington. Her first day on duty, she handled an incoming phone call. "Is Colonel So-and-so there?" the voice asked. The girl covered the receiver with her hand and asked her superior, "Colonel So-and-so has gone to the United Kingdom," she was informed. "I'm sorry," she said to the caller with gentle dignity, "but Colonel So-and-so is dead." BENNETT CERF.

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The Editorial Writer as Columnist

AN AMERICAN DIARY. By Samuel Grafton. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. 1943. 246 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

HISTORY as it has developed in these last few tragic years has been kind to Samuel Grafton's opinions. Step by step, events have justified his positions. Of course, he chose the pieces which appear in this book. Some other things he has written might have marred the pattern here presented. Nevertheless, his writing does come together in this book as a record of wise and passionate comment on what he calls "the development of the ideal of a more democratic world, as that ideal has advanced and receded, flared up and died down, become too ecstatic and then perhaps too morose, since summer 1939."

The important thing about Samuel Grafton is not merely that he is probably the leading "liberal" among practising columnists in American newspapers today. In Grafton terms "Liberalism" means both a faith in a dynamic democracy and a willingness to fight dictatorship from the beginning to the end and everywhere. There is in it an equal willingness to fight demagoguery and meanness at home. It includes an admiration of U.S.S.R. which was not marked by "party line" American isolationism before the Germans invaded Russia. Grafton was for fighting Germany when American Communists were isolationists by instruction. Nor is the significant thing about Grafton that he has been so often right. The importance of the man in print in America today is that there is in him a hardly equalized combination of passion, lucidity, and the ability to put words together with both wit and a wallop.

Samuel Grafton

Perhaps more than any other recently practising columnist Grafton is entitled to the mantle of the late great Heywood Broun. He speaks most forthrightly from the same general position. But the succession can be over-emphasized. Grafton at his best is an effective commentator on current events. But his comments are more tightly tied to the hour and the day of his indignation than Broun's work was. There is no item in this collection which stands as a piece of writing with such qualities of permanence in charm as Broun often put into pieces designed for a day's column. Grafton is the editorial writer as columnist and a good one. He nowhere in the writing collected here makes pretense to the qualities of artist as columnist which Broun put into his work and which is to be found there still.

Such a comparison may be entirely beside the point. The real point is that in Samuel Grafton those who really believe in democracy with a little "d" as well as a big "D" have now an effective, persistent, passionate champion in the daily press. Occasionally his patience in a world of censorship is as short as his sometimes limited information. Certainly that patience is always shortest with stuffed shirts and phonies, the scant of faith, and those short on good will. Though he more often speaks in importance than in praise his essential strength lies in his faith in people, in their courage and dignity, in their capacities for freedom in a free and decent world.

The Price of Immortality

THIS WAS LIDICE. By Gustav Holm. New York: G. P. Putnam's Son. 1943. 235 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

ONLY recently a spokesman of one of the European governments-in-exile rightly remarked that there are hundreds, if not thousands, of "Lidices" all over the Continent. Yet it is that one Czech village which has caught the imagination of novelists and the reading public alike, not to speak of Hollywood. Perhaps it was Edna St. Vincent Millay's poem which set the pattern, perhaps the publicity given by the Nazis themselves to that one act, among innumerable similar atrocities, of their barbarism. Be that as it may, the name of Lidice seems to have outgrown its individual meaning and gained the strength of a symbol.

Probably it was a feeling of this kind which made the present author write his novel the way he has. He makes no psychological pretentions whatsoever. His characters differ in no way from the by now well-known cast of all popular underground stories; they all are present again: the idealistic schoolteacher, the old priest, the good innkeeper and his heroic and lovely daughter, the loquacious barber and—since this is Bohemia—the self-styled half-wit who outwits the tyrants. (Unlike the author of the much-overrated "Hostages," Mr. Holm, as should be pointed out, has given full credit to that figure's original model, the Good Soldier Schwejk.) Equally patterned on familiar clichés are the representatives of the opposite side—including the one "just" German who, while serving the Fuehrer, clings to the "Germany of Schiller and Goethe."

But it is precisely this unpretentious black-and-white method which gives Mr. Holm's narrative, despite the merciless naturalism of its details, a definite element of legend and folklore, heightened by an excellent presentation of the peculiar atmosphere of Czech village life. Surrounded by that fairy-tale aura, even such an utterly fantastic scene as an encounter between the righteous Schwejkish pauper and the all-powerful villain, that is Hitler himself, becomes almost credible. In the traditional happy ending of the fairy-tale is substituted the indomitable spirit of a good and freedom-loving people, the defying *"Nédame se"* of the enslaved Czechs which forecasts the downfall and the punishment of the coarse oppressor.

The author's straightforward plot, the warmth of his sentiments, and his unobstrusive intimacy with the milieu add to the commendable qualities of his volume. In Mr. Holm's account, the pathetic story of Lidice remains as deeply moving as it was the morning the newspapers revealed to its horrified readers the scope of that monstrous crime. And this cannot be said of all anti-Nazi and underground tales.

WAR BONDS
Not a Gift, But Thrift

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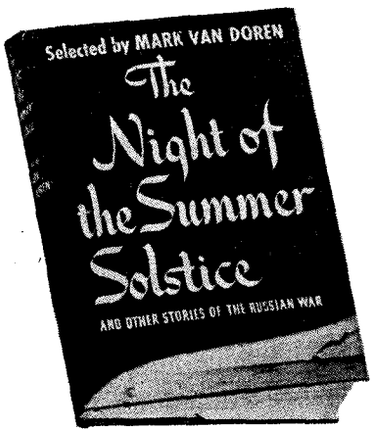
The Tolstoys of tomorrow are pushing the Nazis into the Dnieper . . .



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. . . CONTENTS . . .

THE NIGHT OF THE SUMMER SOLSTICE —A mine sweeper's strange patrol in the Baltic on a day that began in peace and ended in war.

TOP-MOST GUN EMPLACEMENT — Soldier Silantev told the tovarisch commander that he had found the perfect gun position. And he proved it, even against tanks.

HIS SWEETHEART — An unusual tale of love . . . about a blinded tank officer and the nurse whom he believed to be the most beautiful woman in the world.

"LITTLE ONE" — How the invisible mines were discovered by the "flagship horse" of the Baltic coast detachment.

BLUE SCARF—Like a knight of old, the Major wore a blue silken scarf whenever he flew against the enemy, and every time he came back he tied a new knot in it . . .

LEONARD THE BARBER—"A good haircut is also a little sonata," said the barber who planned to be a concert violinist until an air raid put his hands to greater use.

INSIDE THE HUT—Granny was 70 years old, but she could still fight the Germans who occupied her house — and with weapons they never dreamed she could use.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS — The story of the tank crew who could never agree about anything except the way to fight the enemy.

CHILDREN — How a 12-year-old boy told the Germans where the Partisans were, and made them sorry they had ever asked him.

PARTY CARDS — Alexei and his men were holding the village against a whole division. And Katie, his wife, was there to help them do it.

ON THE PETSAMO ROAD — Which reveals how the border guards *always* get through and what they do when they get there.

THE THIRD ADJUTANT—The Commisar had a curious formula for escaping death, but only the brave could make it work.

ON THE CLIFFS OF NORWAY — The story of a group of men who risked their lives for a chance to risk them all over again.

THE PETROGRAD SIDE—An episode of the siege of Leningrad, where nothing really happens except unshakable courage and faith—and sudden death.

SEREZAHA IZMAILOV — The story of the liason pilot who flew a rotten old airplane to glory . . .

THE OLD WATER CARRIER—The villagers hated him for kowtowing to the Germans. But that was before he discovered how to kill with water.

THE SNIPER — Kalobanov faced an enemy patrol in the woods. He had only a hand grenade, a knife, and an idea — but they were enough.

THE GIRL WHO LED THE WAY — The guerilla band admitted that she led them bravely and well despite the fact that she had once been hung . . .

DEATH ON A COLLECTIVE FARM — A single day among the invaders taught old Kotenko how a man can waste an entire lifetime.

NOTES OF A GUERILLA FIGHTER — What a few determined men can do—and how they sometimes die — to hamstring an army.

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1943 Foleyo of Short Stories

THE BEST AMERICAN SHORT STORIES 1943, and the Yearbook of the American Short Story. Edited by Martha Foley. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 428 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by STRUTHERS BURT

TO begin with, I should confess that an anthology of short stories always depresses me in the same way that a literary cocktail party does—there are too many strong personalities around, crowded into a small room, and you haven't time to cultivate any one of them. In the second place, I object to the phrase, or title, "The Best," about anything. Best is a big word, a superlative, and it not only implies omniscience on the part of the judge, but a more than excellent background to choose from. There are thirty short stories in this present annual collection, and some of them aren't very good. On the dust-cover of the volume it is stated that "There are 500,000 short story writers in America, most of them unpublished." Although I have no authority for the statement outside of casual reading, experience, and the hazards of intuition, I doubt if there are fifteen first-class short stories written each year in this, or any other, country.

Of all forms of writing, the short story is the most difficult. It is almost a tour de force. A stroke of lightning. A moment when an author really gets within speaking distance of his, or her, genius, if there's any there. The coming together and the morticing must be perfect—of the moment, the emotion, the idea, the visualization, the character, the incidents, the plot. And the creation must be sustained and at a high pitch. In the history of painting there have been very few great miniatures; it is much easier to paint a big canvas. For the same reasons, it is much easier to write a novel. It is a national tragedy that, because of possible profits, a recent tradition, and the evil influence of many of the big magazines, so many Americans want to write short stories.

Having unburdened myself of this, I can go on to admit—and gladly—that Miss Foley always does a splendid job. I think she has improved upon the original model; she is more catholic, but, at the same time, more discriminating; and seems less prone to be blown about by the particular literary monsoon of the year. This volume is truly representative, and even *The Saturday Evening Post* (twice) is included and *The American Magazine*. The big magazines do occasionally print a good short story; most of their short stories are dreadful. The small magazines do occasionally print a good short story; most of their short stories are dreadful. And that's about all that can be said.

The theory that necessarily the value of a story goes up as its price goes down, is just as guileless as the opposite valuation.

The thirty writers in this new collection are as various as their stories. Vicki Baum is here. Kay Boyle. John Cheever. Vardis Fisher. William Faulkner. Guido D'Agostino. Jerome Weidman. Nancy Hale. William Saroyan. James Thurber. Edita Morris.

So far as I am concerned, I am left with a strengthened conviction, long held, which will probably bring down wrath upon my not altogether defenseless head; I think men write better short stories than women. The average feminine short story is an emotional orgy, in which the mildest release of the author is to fall in love with her heroine, which is usually some aspect of herself. You can't do that in a short story. There's not room for enough build-up. The space is too confined. The best short stories are always objective and are related in a fairly muted, often minor, key. The discipline of the short story is like the discipline of the sonnet. The author lights the lamp and tends it carefully for the little time he has, but if he blows upon it, so short is the time, he will put it out. What he does is to hand the lamp on to the reader, and in the mind of the reader the small flame, if the oil is pure, comes to height and radiance in the darkness, illuminating for awhile the folly and magnificence, the pity, the comfort and terror of life. That's why, of all the stories in this volume—and there are many deeply moving ones—I like best "Samuel Blane," by Murray Dyer. That's a truly good short story.

Martha Foley

Blueprint of Life in Harlem

THE DARKER BROTHER. By Bucklin Moon. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1943. 246 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

BEN JOHNSON and his mother Essie Mae and his Uncle Rafe and his sweetheart Birdie—these are the characters of chief concern in Mr. Moon's novel, and the things that happen to them form a fairly accurate blueprint of the Negro's life in Harlem. From stomping at the Savoy to slugging it out with the white kids in Central Park, from the numbers racket to the religion racket, we get a complete survey, rapid, even hurried, and sometimes obviously arranged so that each character may contribute a different facet of experience to the whole; but it is nonetheless accurate in detail and implication. Everything in the story is honestly reported. What we do miss are some things that are not there.

Chiefly we miss a penetration to the Negro mind, a sense of his particular essence, a reaching to the private levels of his thinking as writers like Claude McKay and Langston Hughes and Richard Wright have reached them. Mr. Moon approaches this in his handling of Slick, Ben's friends, but Slick is a very minor character and vanishes quickly from the scene. He had that special reality about him, but Ben, whom we follow through to the end, is a figurative, anguished back upon which rest all the troubles he's seen. He voices a protest, but it could as well have been voiced by an eloquent essay, of which he is capable.

It occurs to us too that a lot of these things happen also to the white brother — Rafe's murder in the numbers racket has no race significance, nor, even, does Birdie's brief experience with prostitution. This had to be fused into Negro drama by a realization of the Negro character as such. I do not mean, of course, that there is no authentic atmosphere here. There is, as faithful and clear as the columns of a good newspaper. See, for example, Essie Mae's death on Father Gabriel's excursion liner. This kind of good journalism is the book's best feature, its strength.

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A "Layman's" Approach to Peace

PEACE AND RECONSTRUCTION. By Michael O'Shaughnessy. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1943. 152 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by GEORGE N. SHUSTER

A RETIRED business man and founder of the League for Social Justice, Mr. O'Shaughnessy offers his book as a "Catholic layman's approach" to the problems of the post-war world. It reflects the conviction that greed is responsible for the ills of man, and that these can be surmounted if co-operation between employer and employee groups can be organized to provide what Mr. O'Shaughnessy calls "full employment." He is the most optimistic of commentators on the general outlook. Believing that the Government of the United States is the creation of admirable democratic impulses, he is likewise convinced that the moral teaching of the Catholic Church is a sure guide. If then the people of this country will, regardless of creed, elect to carry out the principles expressed in Papal Encyclicals, a peaceful and prosperous future is wholly certain.

Indeed, under the Roosevelt administration just this has been done, in spite of setbacks and minor errors of method. The Popes insist upon the right to a living wage and to the right of association. So does the New Deal. Mr. O'Shaughnessy believes that the wisdom of the course followed is statistically demonstrable. During 1941 Government spending increased by nine billion dollars, while four billion dollars' worth of unused private funds were put back to work. The result was an increase of more than eighteen billion dollars in terms of national income, and the creation of 4,800,000 jobs. Government spending does not terrify Mr. O'Shaughnessy, who believes that the sums impounded by the Government can easily be recovered through taxation. He is wholly in favor of the Beveridge Report.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy's recipe for world organization is consonant with his ideas on the social order. There is, he contends, no point in talking about some kind of "super-government" to which the work to be done can be turned over. The citizen himself must share in the transformation of an industrial society into a human society. Perhaps the best way in which to act is through the "vocational group" to which the individual properly belongs. Just what Mr. O'Shaughnessy means by saying that "vocational groups should be given legal status as integral parts of our governmental machinery" remains unclear, though he does outline a five-point program. The book is a forthright introduction to the Catholic social philosophy, and will be read by many with interest and some surprise.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 15

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. The solution to Crypt No. 15 *will be found in the next issue.*

ABC DECFGHQ DEJKMCLL

DJCEMCN OKN DEJMPCN O

DECAAF DQCOLJKR DEJMPCA.

—LBOPCLDCOEC

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 14

TO HAVE A THING IS NOTHING, IF YOU'VE NOT THE CHANCE TO SHOW IT, AND TO KNOW A THING IS NOTHING, UNLESS OTHERS KNOW YOU KNOW IT.

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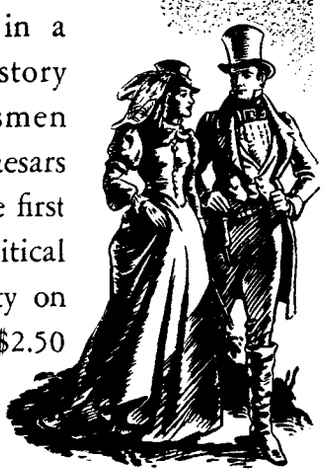

Tidewater

An Atlantic Monthly Press Book

LITTLE, BROWN & CO.

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Back the Attack
With War Bonds

The Scrupulous Detail of Lenore Marshall

NO BOUNDARY. By Lenore G. Marshall. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1943. 59 *pp.* $1.75.

Reviewed by SARA HENDERSON HAY

PERHAPS to be on a September vacation, sitting before a birch fire in Maine and with fog creeping up to the sills, is a most propitious time to review poetry. Maybe the reader's heart is as warm as his toes; maybe a charitable and uncritical glow suffuses him along with the shadowy room. Even so, I do not think I was influenced in the case of Lenore G. Marshall's book of poems, "No Boundary." I believe I should have been warmed and quickened and stimulated by her work, wherever I happened upon it. Her poems have savor and subtlety, they are carefully and expertly done; they bear the stamp of personality.

There is much scrupulous observation and precise imagery—the "blue footprints of deer in snow"; the "veined anemone"; the moors "patched green and bald"; the "Soft laconic snow," the "humped bushes stirring in wind." Only occasionally does the wealth of descriptive imagery strike a false note, as in the poem "Thunderstorm" which begins with fine vigor

> Here comes the lawless rain
> across the sky—
> Let the day halt!

but disappoints the reader by bringing the poem to an anticlimax in the concluding image where the storm leaps "like shining sheets of taffeta." This may be an exact enough pictorial image, but it doesn't fit the strength and sweep of the first part of the poem. Occasionally, too, Mrs. Marshall is betrayed by her own sincerity into a sort of grandiloquence. Such lapses are the exception, however. A sense of balance, of soundness and sound, attend her work. There are many fine, sensitive, perfectly integrated poems in this volume, among them "As Though From Love," from which I quote in part:

> Out of the matrix
> Of those lies
> Light pierced as though
> They had been verities.
>
> At last O at last
> Darkness grew so blind
> That the heart broke:
> Found egress through the mind.
>
> Then from the barren room
> And bleak door
> Creeping from bitter place
> Sorrows turned servitor
>
> Against whom contending
> New vistas rose
> As though from love, as though from hope, as though
> They had been verities. . . .

also "Love Poem" beginning:

> Here where you have never been you walk
> Gentle and true by my side. . .

Miss Marshall is a conservative where form and pattern are concerned, and this pleases me, since her work adds to the bulk of evidence that a poet's scope, his originality, his freedom of thought and expression need never be hampered by the exigencies of rhyme and metre. Her poetry is finished, mature (except in the case of one or two pieces which I suspect are earlier work), filled with deep personal emotion. The reader feels that these poems were written because they had to be written—not that the author tapped her pencil against her teeth and said to herself "Let's see—what would be a good thing to write a poem about . . . ?" This is not to say that Mrs. Marshall does not care whether or not people enjoy and understand her poetry. I have never believed that any poet, even Emily Dickinson, wrote without hoping, at least, for the appreciation of some public, even a public made up of only a few intimates. But I feel that Mrs. Marshall, if she had been shipwrecked on a desert island, would have written these same poems, with the same scrupulous attention to detail, the same integrity and intensity of thought and craftsmanship. They are the natural expression of her heart; her "Speaking likeness."

Lenore Marshall

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Shostakovich's Formative Influences

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH: THE LIFE AND BACKGROUND OF A SOVIET COMPOSER. By Victor Ilyich Seroff in Collaboration with Nadejda Galli-Shohat. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1943. 270 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by DAVID HALL

Dmitri Dmitrierich Shostakovich

LIKE most first biographies, this one by Victor Seroff dealing with the Soviet Union's extraordinarily gifted composer, Dmitri Shostakovich, is hardly definitive. Yet its value as a rich source of material for future critics and biographers can scarcely be under-estimated. For one thing, Mr. Seroff has not had to depend on "official" data for his account of the composer's early years. Instead, he has been able to get first-hand information from Nadejda Galli-Shohat, the composer's aunt who was with the family until 1923 and until recently kept in close touch with them by letter.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising to find that the most illuminating portions of Mr. Seroff's book deal with the early career of Shostakovich from his birth in 1906 to the premiere of the First Symphony in 1926. Some will complain that there is to much emphasis in this first biography on the composer's family—that he tells us perhaps more about mother and father, sisters and aunts than about Shostakovich and his music. With these critics I strongly disagree. Seroff has very wisely placed emphasis on the material with which he was most familiar and which he felt could be best relied upon to give us a true picture of the formative influences which have served to produce one of the genuinely gifted musical creators of our time. For obvious reasons, complete accounts of the composer's mature years and a valid critical estimate of his music as a whole will have to wait for a good number of years. After all, Shostakovich is still only 37 years of age; and despite his output of seven symphonies has still to reach the zenith of his creative ability.

In Mr. Seroff's biography we learn via the medium of eminently readable prose that Dmitri Shostakovich came from a family of what might be described as "bourgeois liberal intellectuals." His mother, indeed, was a musician of exceptional talent. She gave the young Dmitri his early musical training and later saw to it that he received the proper professional

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE SAINT STEPS IN *Leslie Charteris* (Crime Club: $2.)	Intrigue and violence in wartime Washington keep Simon Templar busy righting wrongs in high-handed fashion.	Efforts of mysterious and powerful influences to hamper inventor finally thwarted by "Saint" after considerable bloodshed.	Typical "Saint" yarn
SALLY'S IN THE ALLEY *Norbert Davis* (Morrow: $2.)	Deaths of movie actress and other unfortunates in Western town involve sleuth Doan and his faithful Carstairs.	Presence of Carstairs, dignified Great Dane, means something going on every minute—most of it wacky.	Good and rowdy
NIGHT ATTACK *Lee Crosby* (Dutton: $2.)	Sabotage in Long Island munitions plant investigated by "trouble shooter" Peter Wayne with murderous results.	Quickly moving spy story, with ample thrills, action, mystery, and a climax both exciting and surprising.	Good—in its class

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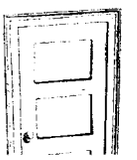

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guidance even at the greatest material sacrifice to herself.

The story of the years following the October Revolution is a grim one; for, in common with most of the Russian people, the Shostakovich family waged a terrible and often losing battle against disease, starvation, and debt. This was further complicated by the death of the father in 1922. The fact that Dmitri's father had served under the Czarist regime in the Department of Weights and Measure made the struggle that much harder, despite the fact that both mother and father were of leftist political leanings. The reader is made to realize that the life of a non-party member during the first ten years of the Bolshevik regime was incredibly difficult. That Dmitri Shostakovich eventually secured recognition as a significant composer when only 19 years of age was due in large part to the tremendous courage and will power of his mother. Sensing the potential future of her son, she was willing to sacrifice her health and part of the education of her two daughters in order that Dmitri should complete his studies at the Leningrad Conservatory. Under the circumstances, it is easy to see why she opposed her son's marriage at a later date. With the performance of Dmitri's First Symphony in 1926, the future began to look a little brighter.

From this point on we see the young composer trying to achieve both artistic independence and a certain amount of independence from his family. There is the crisis provoked by his marriage in May, 1932. Meanwhile Dmitri produced music in every conceivable form—two symphonies, a piano concerto, film scores, ballets, and smaller pieces of various types.

The next great turning point in the creative and personal life of Shostakovich was the rebuke from *Pravda* apropos of his opera, "Lady Macbeth of Mzensk." Mr. Seroff's discussion of this puzzling episode is thoroughly illuminating in every respect and singularly free from unreasoning prejudice. After carefully explaining the role of the creative artist in the U.S.S.R., he proceeds to give a completely plausible explanation of the composer's temporary eclipse and subsequent recovery of prestige in his own country.

Here perhaps lies the most enduring value of this initial biography of Shostakovich. It gives not only the immediate family background of the man himself and a vivid word picture of the composer's early years, it also gives us an objective appraisal of the historical and social forces at work on the creative artists of modern Russia.

The Phoenix Nest

I HAVE been asked to correct an impression that the course at Columbia given by the distinguished critic, Mary M. Colum, and her equally distinguished husband, Padraic Colum, is in English Literature. It is actually in *Philosophy.* It is called a course on World Perspective in Modern Literature, and is given from 4:10 to 6 P. M. on Tuesday afternoons. It will be resumed on October 5 of this year in the Philosophy Department of Columbia University. The course covers outstanding figures in modern literature from Goethe to James Joyce.

I wish belatedly to thank Ellen Spiker of Lakewood, Ohio, for sending me the clipping from *The Progressive* in which the Chairman of the War Department's Price Adjustment Board says that "the pattern of profit growth in this war is virtually the same as in the last war." The Treasury Estimates were interesting too.

I wish to recommend to everybody a poem by Archibald MacLeish in a recent issue of *The New Yorker.* It was a Poet's voice from the Gallery addressed to the Gentlemen in Congress. I don't know when I've enjoyed a poem so much!

Here is a simple set of verses by Virginia Scott Miner which she has kindly allowed me to use. I like what they say.

THOSE RUSSIANS

They fought and froze and retreated,
They fought the mud and snow.
They lost their fields and railroads
At a cost no man may know.

But they didn't fight the grocer
Or the board that rations fuel
Though their stomachs ached with hunger
And the Russian nights are cruel.

For they knew that war is bitter
And any life is brief,
And man at any moment
May fall like an autumn leaf.

I don't know all the answers
(I wish I did, my son!)
But that's the only way I know
They could do the things they've done.

It was back in June that I got a very good letter from D. L. Chambers, the president of Bobbs-Merrill in Indianapolis. I print it now, with apologies to him for being so dilatory. The Kesters must have been an amazing family. Has anyone ever written a biography of either? Here's Mr. Chambers's letter:

> It pleases me to read in The Phoenix Nest that you remember Vaughan Kester—only he spelled his first name "Vaughan." He was a grand fellow. If I remember correctly he died of cancer of the throat before his great success "The Prodigal Judge" was published. But he had finished another novel, "The Just And The Unjust" (a title which was recently swiped), and this was published after "The Prodigal Judge."
>
> The Kesters at that time were living at Gunston Hall, John Mason's old home, near Washington. They were a wonderful family, all great talkers. When they were going strong they would stay up all night talking and the conversation was fascinating. Paul survived Vaughan many years. While he wrote several books he was most celebrated for his plays and dramatizations. The only survivor of the old group is Paul Wilstach who had a house called "Overbrook" on the Gunston estate.

And, since we're reminiscing, Genevieve Brandt of New York City, a charter reader of the *SRL,* writes me, "The inclosed tribute to the Ohio River is perhaps the most secular 'selection' in the Album of my grandmother. The contributions to this Album were penned (and many very elegantly) in Burlington, Athens, and Gallipoli, in the years 1833 to 1838 with a few later entries. Although the subject is considerably more 'poetic' than its treatment, I thought you might be interested, especially in the 'Indian chieftain.' It is signed 'E. Morse.' But is he — or she — the author?"

THE OHIO
(Burlington, Ohio, 1834)

The moonlight sleeps upon thy shores,
Fair river of the west!
And the soft sound of dipping oars
Just breaks the evening rest.
Full many a bark its silver path
Is tracing o'er thy tide;
And list! the sound of song and laugh
Floats onward where they glide.
They're from light hearts, those sounds so gay,
Whose home and hopes are here,
But one, whose home is far away,
Their music fails to cheer.
Yon cloudless moon tonight looks down
Upon no lovelier sight
Than the river winding proudly on—
Yet beautiful, in night;
Onward still to the mighty west,
Where the prairie wastes unfold,
Where the Indian chieftain went to rest
As his last war-signal rolled.
No—never arched the blue skies o'er
A wave more fair and free
But the stream around my mother's door
Is dearer far to me.

I recommend that to my friend Carl Carmer, as present editor of the River Series for Farrar & Rinehart!

My old friend Arthur W. Bell of

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Beacon Street, Boston, has sent me the following pleasing quatrain:

LA DONNA E MOBILIZED

The girls are now discarding slacks
For uniforms of WAVES or WAACS:
These bold emancipation backers
Thus prove themselves to be no slackers.

The following interesting letter comes from Mrs. Maurice C. Rider of Wyomissing, Pennsylvania.

Thank you for giving us the pleasure of reading the copy of a Bill from Westchester Cathedral. I have cut it from the SRL and pasted it in my copy of Agnes Repplier's "In Pursuit of Laughter." She has captured this same gaiety of the Middle Ages in her charming little story of St. Thomas Aquinas:

"St. Thomas, hurrying as fast as so heavy a man could hurry along the corridor of the monastery to Vespers passed a statue of the Blessed Virgin. It opened its lips and said admonishingly, 'Thomas, you are late;' to which the Saint replied, also admonishingly, 'Mary, it is the Hour of Silence.'"

It seems in those "far away and long ago" days that Man had a childlike frivolity about saints, and walked hand in hand with them!

I thank C. N. Mackinnon of Ohio University for his frank letter about his own thoughts on free enterprise and control, in the course of which he recommends for reading Marquis Child's "Sweden, the Middle Way." I agree with him that most men are good fellows, and generous. It's the game they have to play that often makes them into something that astonishes them themselves. The present business and economic system inevitably turns such simple old-fashioned virtues as generosity and fair dealing into handicaps, and puts a premium on a callous disregard for the rights and the happiness of others. The excuse for this is, "You can't change human nature," and that Nature decreed the Struggle for Existence and the Survival of the Fittest!

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Browning: "My Last Duchess."
6. Coleridge: "The Ancient Mariner."
5. Emerson: "Goodbye."
14. Goldsmith: "The Deserted Village."
10. Gray: "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard."
3. Jonson: "To Celia."
11. Keats: "La Belle Dame Sans Merci."
9. Longfellow: "A Psalm of Life."
13. Parker: "Resume."
2. Poe: "The Raven."
8. Pope: "Essay on Man."
7. Shakespeare: "Sonnet CXVI."
12. Shelley: "Ozymandias."
15. Thayer: "Casey At the Bat."
4. Waller: "Go, Lovely Rose."

PERSONALS

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(Continued on next page)

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—WALTER V. T. CLARK

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The Crostics Club

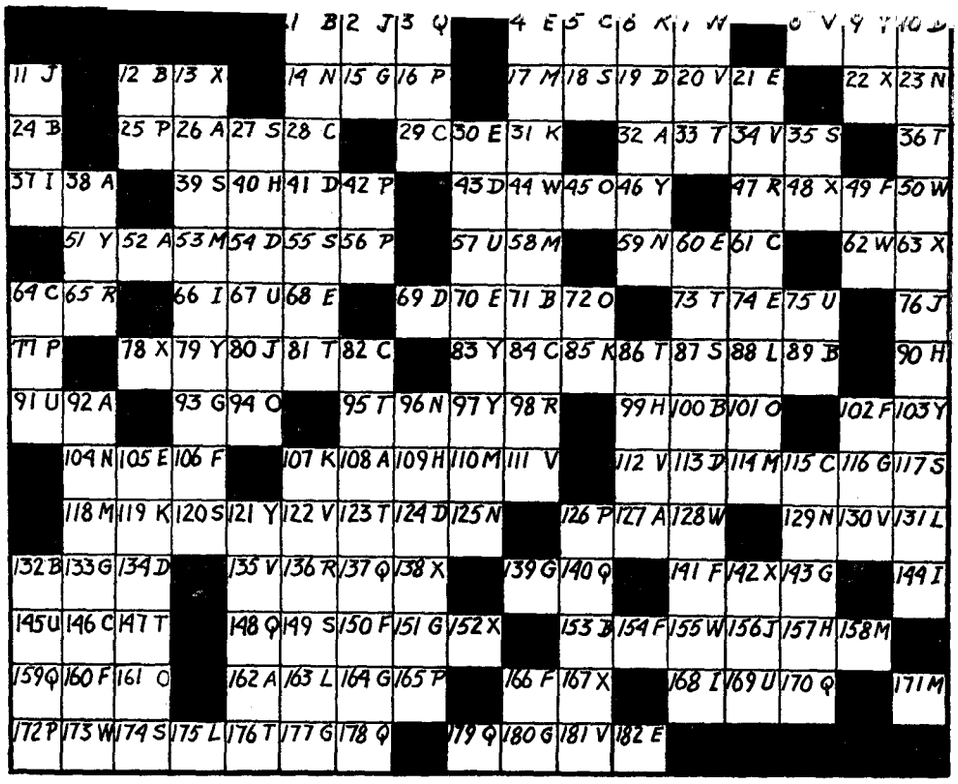
G. T. NORTHUP, La Jolla, Calif., known to students of Spanish through his book reviews and his History of Spanish Literature, thus tersely expresses the DCer's joys as he sees them "(1) The backpatting one gives oneself on being able to fill in several of the more recondite crosswords at the start. (2) The fun of handling reference works. (A scholar is not necessarily possessed of a John Kieran memory, but is one who knows how to seek the answer to every question scientifically and systematically.) (3) Seeing the wraiths of words assume body and form. (4) The uprush of the subconscious, for intuition always comes to the aid when everything else fails."

Here is part of a letter from Will Ransom, University of Oklahoma Press, thanking the DCs for their contribution to literate amusement, and continuing happily: "The battles over reference works and time touch me lightly. Use of the former, while educational, eliminates the challenge to imagination and ingenuity. And hurrying through leaves so much more time to wait for the next one. Strange words only add to the excitement. And the few diagramless DCs I have seen are the most fun. Perhaps my system of solution may amuse you. When I am stuck—rarely and temporarily—I remember the man who lost a horse and think what I would say if I were writing a quotation for you. It always works."

Laura Z. Hobson, whose novel was reviewed in the *SRL* of September 1, writes a jolly letter about her recent introduction to DCs, involving a troubled conscience as to what is fair play and what is not in their solution. When she has become hardened to them, I hope the method won't matter as long as she enjoys doing them.

Mrs. John Rolph, an old DC friend, contends, as did Brenda Putnam, that DCs sharpen one's wits for mechanical drawing (not, however, a new field for her) and in making the analogy she cites specifically the "great advantage of starting with a few lines and points that you were perfectly sure of and could use as check-references for the doubtful ones." And she concludes graciously, "So I, too, say, 'Thank you, teacher.'"

In connection with the recent issue on Reference Books I was reminded of an address given some years ago by William H. Maxwell, famous Superintendent of New York City schools. In commenting on fads and fancies as evidenced in the new system of teaching reading before the child knew his alphabet, he feared that twenty-five years hence the man would not know how to use the dictionary or other reference books. Of course he didn't foresee the immense vogue for crosswords and other puzzling, but I have often wondered to what extent his fears have been realized. **E. S. K.**



Double-Crostics: No. 497

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1940 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 8 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Piecemeal (3 wds.)

B. Meaningless burden in ancient sea songs.

C. Except; besides (colloq.; 2 wds.)

D. English humorous novelist (1881-).

E. N. A. goatsucker related to the whip-poorwill.

F. Hamitic-Kushite speech in Abyssinia (comp.)

G. Fine brown-glazed 18th Cent. English stoneware.

H. One of the four rivers of Paradise.

I. Immeasurably long periods of time.

J. Exclamation of approval (comp.)

K. Composer of a famous *Bolero*.

L. Time long since passed.

M. Possessed of the devil.

N. Having constant depth.

O. French poet and novelist (1810-76).

P. Imaged.

Q. *Heart* story by Poe—1843 (comp.; with *The*).

R. City of Siberia-Soviet Russia.

S. Superfluous abundance.

T. Arousing aversion; forbidding.

U. Italian goddess of the fruit of trees (Roman relig.)

V. So. African race of which the Namas are the purest left.

W. Fundamental feature.

X. In or into subjection.

Y. To rid oneself of (2 wds.)

WORDS

162 127 38 52 26 32 108 92

89 100 12 1 24 71 132 153

64 115 29 28 5 82 61 84 146

69 43 134 10 113 54 19 124 41

60 70 4 21 105 30 74 68 182

154 49 102 141 106 150 160 166

164 180 93 143 151 133 116 15 177 139

109 157 40 99 90

37 168 66 144

2 11 156 80 76

85 119 6 31 107

131 163 175 88

118 58 17 114 158 171 53 110

104 125 59 129 96 14 23

45 94 72 161 101

25 172 56 126 16 42 77 165

3 140 178 179 159 148 137 170

136 47 98 65

174 87 27 120 149 55 18 35 39 117

33 86 95 123 73 36 147 81 176

75 91 57 67 169 145

135 181 20 112 130 122 8 34 111

7 62 50 173 128 44 155

142 152 138 13 78 167 48 63 22

97 9 51 121 46 79 83 103

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